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Evaluation of English Language Needs, Preparation, and Screening Among Non-Native English Speaking Officers and Soldiers

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<p>This research note offers information that will contribute to the establishment of minimum competency levels for two tests of English proficiency -- the English Comprehension Level Test and the Oral Proficiency Interview. Data were collected from the Defense Language Institute and the Personnel Information Systems Command, based on the responses of 72 non-native English speaking soldiers, and 39 of their supervisors, and from 119 surveys of officers commissioned in Puerto Rico.</p> <p>Findings indicate that the tests do not adequately measure the English proficiency soldiers need to do their jobs. A model for determining the validity of established test standards is appended to the research note. <i>language</i></p> <p><i>Keywords: Test construction psychology; Personnel selection; Army officer personnel selection; enlisted personnel</i></p>					
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EVALUATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS, PREPARATION, AND SCREENING AMONG NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Requirement:

AIR was asked to evaluate aspects of the English-as-a-second language component of the Army's Basic Skills Education Program (BSEP) for the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences. As part of this evaluation, AIR evaluated the language needs, preparation, and screening among non-native English speaking U.S. Army officers and soldiers. The major purpose of the evaluation was to work toward determining the minimum competency levels on two measures of English proficiency, the English Comprehension Level Test (ECLT) and the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) for non-native English speaking U.S. Army personnel. The scope of this evaluation was to begin establishing a base of information that would support standard setting exercises if needed.

Procedure:

Data were collected from databases maintained by the Defense Language Institute (DLI) and Personnel Information Systems Command (PERSINSCOM), containing descriptive and outcome information on non-native English speaking Army personnel; interviews with 72 non-native English speaking Army personnel and 39 supervisors at seven sites; observations of classroom instruction and informal interviews with staff at four sites for English language training; and 119 responses to a survey mailed to officers commissioned or appointed in Puerto Rico.

To address the question of whether the English preparation and screening for non-native English speaking Army personnel were adequate, we examined how English proficiency screening criteria related to available measures of career success in the Army, and looked at how non-native English speakers and their supervisors felt about how well these tests assessed their English abilities. A model for further study of the validity of test standards was also prepared.

Findings:

While the ECLT has been correlated with other standardized measures of language proficiency and reading ability, and the comprehension rating on the OPI appears to be moderately related to the ECLT, findings from this evaluation indicate that these tests do not adequately measure all relevant aspects and levels of English proficiency for non-native English speaking Puerto Rican Army personnel. Analyses of available outcome data for officers and enlisted personnel showed that overall, these measures of English proficiency were not significantly related to available indicators of success in the Army. These indicators were: rank, level of education, GT and SQT scores, and whether or not the officers and enlisted soldiers were, according to PERSINSCOM records, still active in the Army.

These analyses were supported by interview, observation, and survey data that indicate that overall, the officers and enlisted personnel were adequately prepared, but that screening could be improved by focusing on skills that were the most difficult or most important for these non-native English speakers. The opinion of enlisted soldiers and officers familiar with the ECLT generally was that it did not adequately assess the English skills that non-native speakers needed to know to succeed in the Army. The English skills that were most important or most difficult for officers and enlisted personnel were conversational skills (using correct pronunciation, speaking and understanding English used in the Army). For officers, having adequate writing skills was critical, especially in writing the kinds of documents required by the Army, such as Officer Evaluation Reports, Enlisted Evaluation Reports, awards, and other reports. The opinion of interviewees and survey respondents was that non-native speakers needed better preparation before reaching training situations or their first assignments, and that they would also benefit from opportunities to improve their English skills once they become active in the Army.

Utilization of Findings:

Findings from this evaluation lead us to conclude that current measures of English proficiency do not sufficiently test the English skills that officers and enlisted members felt were most important or most difficult. Thus, before attempting to answer the

question of whether the standards set on the ECLT or the OPI are appropriate, program administrators should first examine what English skills are related to success in the Army, and whether the tests measure these skills. They should also consider whether current English preparation for officers and enlisted members adequately addresses the skills non-native speakers say they need.

Screening. The ECLT may be successful at screening for some important English skills, such as knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, but this is not sufficient; it does not appear to assess those skills that Army personnel generally said they found difficult or that they needed. The listening comprehension portion of the ECLT, which comprises almost two-thirds of the test, could better measure proficiency in this skill by allowing students to make sense of longer 'chunks' of conversation that provide the context and redundancy inherent in the natural speech of native speakers. The ECLT could also have more relevance for students if it included conversations from Army contexts. While the OPI did not correlate with available indicators of success, it does test students' conversational English, one of the language skills that Army personnel said they needed. The OPI might serve as a better screening device, however, if it required students to listen to and use more of the language that they might need in real life military situations. Neither test assesses proficiency in the writing skills officers said they needed; thus a writing component could be added to the screening process for officers.

English preparation. Formal English programs should allow more opportunities for non-native speakers to speak English both in and outside of the classroom. Classroom instruction could offer more activities that allow students to use English as the medium for communicating ideas and opinions, and for discussing issues of importance to them. The more chances students have to communicate in English, the more opportunities they will have to work on and correct their pronunciation, an aspect of English cited as a problem for both officers and enlisted personnel. Non-native English speaking officers should receive more formal instruction in writing; especially in writing military documents. This instruction would supplement writing courses already provided in ROTC and at BOBC (which are primarily intended for speakers of English as a first language). Formal English instruction should be made widely available to non-native English speaking ROTC cadets, and it should begin as early as possible in their ROTC careers. Finally, English instruction should take place in environments that provide ample opportunities for Army

personnel to use English, and opportunities for improvement in English should also be available for officers and enlisted members at their duty assignments.

Chapter 1. Introduction To English-as-a-Second-Language

The Army has offered formal instruction in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) since 1967, when it first began providing instruction to non-native English speaking enlisted members in a six-week program incorporated in their training bases. Over the past two decades the form and content of Army ESL instruction have evolved, while the need to develop English language fluency has remained constant (Hahn, Krug, Rosenbaum & Stoddart, 1986).

Continuing Need for ESL Instruction

The Army is expected to continue its steady recruitment of non-native English speaking officers and enlisted members beyond the close of this century. Demographic projections indicate that, during the next decade, the population of 18 to 20-year olds who comprise the prime accession group for recruitment will decline in absolute numbers (Berry, Oxford-Carpenter, Gendell, & Wheatley, 1985). At the same time, minority populations, particularly Hispanic groups, will increase in relative and absolute numbers for this age group. This change in population characteristics will mean that the Army will, in all likelihood, be recruiting a greater proportion of the minority, non-native English speaking population to meet its manpower needs. Coupled with a desire to promote equal opportunity through *minority recruitments*, and to recruit officers and enlisted members who speak languages in addition to English, these factors argue that ESL instruction will remain an important part of Army education.

Current ESL Programs

Beginning with experimental programs in 1980, the Army has transferred much of the responsibility for ESL instruction to the Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC) at Lackland Air Force Base. Although the major programs are discussed

in greater length in subsequent chapters of this report, an overview of the programs is given here.

ESL for Enlisted Members

DLIELC provides up to 24 weeks of residential instruction in English for enlisted members who are non-native English speakers and who score less than 70 on the English Comprehension Level Test (ECLT), which they may take at Army recruiting stations or at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) in Puerto Rico. Soldiers typically are referred to the program before Basic Combat Training (BCT) and are released when they consistently score 70 or better on the ECLT and 1+ in comprehension and 1 in speaking on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

In addition to the DLIELC program, the Army continues to offer some ESL instruction through continuing education programs at military installations. These programs appear to be declining in enrollment, and their future appears questionable (Hahn, Krug, Rosenbaum & Stoddart, 1986).

Finally, Puerto Rican enlisted reservists and National Guard members can receive ESL instruction through classes at the Puerto Rican Army National Guard-Language Center (PRARNG-LC). Depending on ECLT scores, students may remain in the program from nine to 18 weeks. The curriculum is the same as that offered at DLIELC, as are exit criteria on the ECLT and OPI.

ESL for Officers

A considerable amount of English language instruction for potential officers is delivered through the University of Puerto Rico's Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs. ROTC classes are conducted in English and there is additional on-campus English instruction for cadets. Cadets also improve their English at Basic and Advanced Camp.

Until 1987, PRARNG-LC hosted a summer program of English for ROTC cadets. Eligibility was determined by performance on the ECLT demonstrating insufficient

proficiency in English. The summer English Program is now offered to cadets at ROTC campuses.

Finally, DLIELC has provided a residential program to Army officers and warrant officers since 1982. The majority of those attending are officers commissioned through the University of Puerto Rico ROTC program, who are referred for further English language instruction. Officers are enrolled at DLIELC for 16 weeks. The goal is to obtain two consecutive ECLT scores of 90 or better and minimum scores on the OPI of 2+ in comprehension and 2 in speaking.

Background of the Evaluation

AIR has provided the Army Research Institute and the Soldier Education Division of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (ODCSPER) with evaluative information about their ESL programs for several years. Our final report on the Basic Skills Education Program (Hahn, Krug, Rosenbaum & Stoddart, 1986) summarizes changes and progress in Army ESL instruction from 1979 to 1986. These earlier studies found, among other things, that participants did improve their performance on the ECLT during residence at DLIELC, and that among enlisted members a higher score on the ECLT was associated with a greater likelihood of completing BCT. However, the information led to further questions from the Soldier Education Division about the effectiveness of ESL instruction and the appropriateness of the test scores set as standards for proficiency. At a meeting in June 1987 of staff from the Army Research Institute, the Soldier Education Division of the ODCSPER, and AIR, we were asked to work toward the development of minimum competency levels on the ECLT and OPI for non-native English speaking officers and enlisted members. The evaluation that was conducted to address this task is described in the following chapter.

Chapter 2. Conducting the ESL Program Evaluation

This chapter presents the purposes and major tasks of the ESL program evaluation. It serves as a background for the findings presented in subsequent chapters.

Purposes

The major purposes of the evaluation were clarified at a meeting of the Soldier Education Division, ODCSPER; Army Research Institute; and AIR staff on 17 June 1987. These were to work toward the development of minimum competency levels on the ECLT and OPI for non-native English speaking (1) officers and (2) enlisted members. The desired minimum competency levels would be those that admitted all and only potential officers or enlisted members who had demonstrated adequate English skills for success in the Army. These test criteria might be visualized as a screen, sifting out any candidate who could not succeed, and passing through any who could. It was recognized that time and personnel resources would not permit us to determine empirically-based performance standards within the one-year period of the evaluation. Thus, the operational purpose of these activities was to establish a base of information that would support standard-setting exercises if needed.

Contributing to Decisions

The purposes set for our examination of ESL test standards did not lead to a traditional evaluation if that is strictly defined as the "systematic investigation of the merit or worth of an object" (Joint Committee, 1981, p. 152). Our task was not to judge the validity of the ECLT and OPI, or the quality of ESL instruction, but to provide information that would assist Army educators and policy makers in setting equitable and effective English proficiency standards. In designing an evaluation that would inform decision making, we followed AIR's preferred approach to evaluation as an ongoing

problem-solving process (AIR, 1986). This approach emphasizes understanding the causes, surrounding contexts, and multiple effects associated with the program or policy being investigated. It differs from a problem-reduction approach, which is solely concerned with whether a given program accomplishes its stated objectives. To make a medical analogy, a problem-reduction study would be satisfied with reporting whether Medication A cured a disease; a problem-solution study would also explore the nature of the disease and the conditions affecting the potency of the medication.

Although setting test standards is not the same as prescribing a drug, understanding the underlying condition is crucial in both cases. It was our judgment in designing this evaluation that ESL test standards must ultimately rest upon a knowledge of what English language skills are required for success as an officer or enlisted member in the Army, and then upon the ability of the standards to distinguish between adequate and inadequate performance on these skills. Legal challenges to civilian employment tests or professional certification criteria have been satisfied when it is demonstrated that an entry standard is related to the work that will be performed. The relationship can be demonstrated through empirical measures (such as typing tests for secretarial applicants), or expert judgments (medical college faculty deciding whether a test measures what they believe a beginning physician should know about anatomy; teachers judging whether a certification test reflects the skills and knowledge a novice must have to teach effectively).

Building a Feedback Process

We had proposed from earlier evaluations that the Army Continuing Education System establish a quality control system that it could use to monitor and control programs such as ESL instruction (AIR, 1984). Consistent with that recommendation, we attempted to establish an ESL information pool in this evaluation that exploited existing data bases, demonstrated methods for coordinating input from various existing sources, and that added a minimum of response burden to those from whom we wished to collect information. We did not, for example, propose that the Army enlist a group of recruits whose English skills ranged from marginal to fluent, run them through BCT with no language instruction, and compare the ECLT scores of those who succeeded and those who failed. This would have been an acceptable research design, but it is not the way the Army operates and thus could not have become the mechanism for collecting ongoing information.

Evaluation Questions

Instead, we chose to address two major evaluation questions with full knowledge that they could not be answered completely in the course of this evaluation. We also chose to use existing data sources that might be limited in their ability to lead to generalized findings, but which would be relevant and practical for Army needs. The evaluation questions that guided this study were:

- What English language ability is needed for success as an officer or enlisted member? What English abilities do non-native speakers judge to be minimum requirements for entry and career progress? What abilities do their supervisors judge necessary? What abilities are correlated with available indicators of success?
- Is English language preparation (screening and instruction) adequate? Do non-native English speakers and their supervisors judge officers and enlisted members who speak English as a second language to be sufficiently screened and prepared when they are placed on their first duty assignment? Is the initial level of preparation related to available measures of success?

Sources of Information

Our evaluation stressed practicality and we hoped to establish a data base that could be adopted easily for further use. This determined the population to be studied as well as the sources of information about this population.

Sample Group

Native Spanish speakers comprise the largest non-native English speaking group among Army officers and enlisted members, and the University of Puerto Rico ROTC program is the Army's major source of native Spanish speaking officers. Because it seemed probable that a speaker's native language and cultural background could influence his or her prior preparation and English instruction needs, we decided to focus on the single, relatively homogeneous group of Puerto Rican officers and enlisted members. This

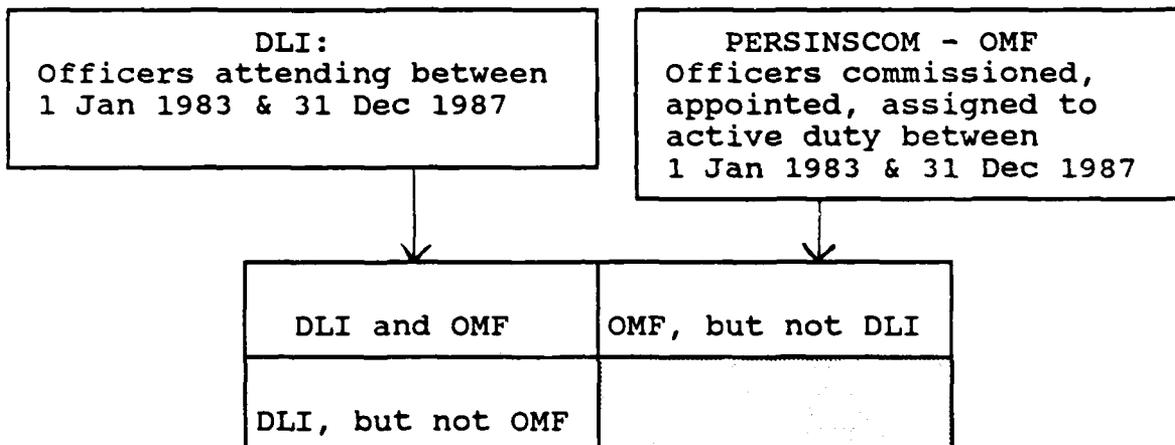
meant that we would forego study of those whose native language was other than Spanish, and those Spanish-speakers who were not from Puerto Rico. Thus, findings could not be generalized to groups such as Korean allied forces studying in the United States, or U.S. Army personnel from the Philippines. In an evaluation such as this one, in which the aim is to understand and explain how a program works rather than to test a preformulated hypothesis, selecting typical or common cases is appropriate (Patton, 1980). Time and other resources are never unlimited. In this case we chose to pursue in-depth information about a single, typical group of non-native English speaking personnel rather than to provide more superficial findings about a more diverse sample.

The two major sources of information about such officers and enlisted members were the data bases maintained by the Defense Language Institute and Personnel Information Systems Command (PERSINSCOM). These data bases determined our sample. They did not explicitly identify personnel as "non-native English speaking Puerto Rican," but they did indicate the location from which an individual joined the Army or went on active duty. Thus we could identify enlisted persons who had enlisted in Puerto Rico and officers who had been commissioned or gone on active duty there. And, we wanted the sample to include officers who had attended DLIELC as well as those who had not, in order to contrast pre-instruction English facility, and to assure some standardization in English instruction following induction. Thus we limited the sample to exclude those who had joined the Army before DLIELC provided its current form of ESL instruction. Operationally, this meant that our samples included:

- Officers included in the Officer Master File (OMF) commissioned, appointed, or assigned to active duty from Puerto Rico on or after 1 January 1983; and those who had attended DLIELC on or after 1 January 1983.
- Enlisted members who had attended DLIELC on or after 1 September 1985; matched with Enlisted Master File (EMF) records of these same soldiers.

Figure 2.1 sketches the samples of officers and enlisted members that resulted from these criteria.

OFFICERS



ENLISTED

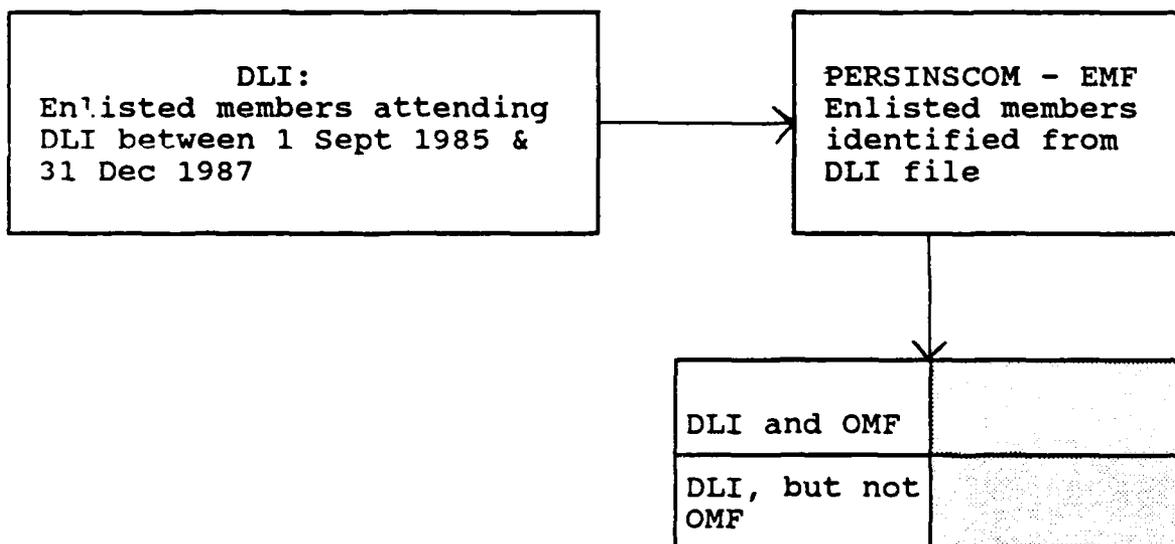


FIGURE 2.1. Description of Officers and Enlisted Members Samples for ESL Evaluation

Data Sources

Two of the major data sources have already been cited. They are regularly maintained military information systems that could continue to provide quality control data.

PERSINSCOM and DLIELC Records. The testing section at DLIELC maintains computerized records of officers and enlisted members who attend the English Language Center. These records contain ECLT and OPI scores, other performance evaluations, dates of attendance, and indicators of whether the student graduated. The DLIELC personnel furnished AIR with data tapes on enlisted members and officers, approximately once each quarter during the evaluation. Staff at DLIELC also provided us with hand-written information that we were able to add to some incomplete records. These data were merged with information from the EMF and OMF.

PERSINSCOM maintains the Army's personnel records, and its Total Army Personnel Agency (TAPA) division prepared and forwarded to us tapes containing information on selected variables for the sampled enlisted members (EMF) and officers (OMF). These variables included background factors that could reasonably be related to English proficiency (such as level of civilian education), and factors that appeared to be direct or surrogate (e.g., AFQT score) measures of success. The PERSINSCOM-supplied data tapes also included information about the individual's present location, which was used in scheduling on-site interviews. PERSINSCOM later prepared a mailing-label tape used for a mail survey of officers. Appendix A lists the variables from the DLIELC, EMF, and OMF records that were used in the evaluation.

Instruments designed for the evaluation. The availability of existing data bases meant that relatively few additional instruments were needed for the evaluation. We developed a Language Activity Rating for Enlisted Personnel that abstracted the English communication tasks identified in the Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks, Skill Levels I and II. Using this form, supervisors were asked to record whether they had observed the enlisted member carrying out this activity (e.g., "reports on-duty observations") and if they had, to rate the performance on a scale from "better than most soldiers" to "performs inadequately." A comparable Language Activity Rating for Officers was derived

from the content of the Military Qualification Standards (MOS) II Manual of Common Tasks. Copies of both rating forms are included in Appendix B.

The third instrument developed for the evaluation was the English Language Preparation: Officer's Survey, which is also reprinted in Appendix B. This questionnaire was mailed to all officers in the sample group, and paralleled in content the personal interviews held with a smaller number of officers. It covered the officers' evaluation of their background and preparation in English.

Interview protocols. Through information provided by PERSINSCOM we were able to identify the current duty assignments of soldiers who enlisted and officers who were commissioned, appointed, or assumed active duty in Puerto Rico, and to arrange on-site interviews with a sample of them and their immediate supervisors. Standard, although deliberately general, interview questions were used to prompt discussion on topics salient to the evaluation. The purpose here was to encourage the interviewees to recount their own experiences. The questions are listed in Appendix B and the interview procedures are described more fully in the chapters reporting their findings.

Evaluation Activities

The various activities undertaken for the evaluation are detailed in each chapter that presents their findings. A shortened overview at this point will help to illustrate how they were coordinated.

Information from DLIELC and PERSINSCOM in January 1988 allowed us to identify officers and enlisted members¹ for interviews. Between late January and mid-April 1988 we visited eight Army installations, interviewing officers, enlisted members, and their supervisors at each one. We observed ESL instruction at DLIELC and interviewed students and staff. Finally, we conducted observations and interviewed students and staff members at two University of Puerto Rico ROTC programs and at the PRARNG-LC. In addition to getting participants' evaluations of how well prepared they were at various stages in their

¹To avoid the cumbersomeness of describing the sample in full each time it is mentioned, we will simply refer to those in the evaluation sample as "officers and enlisted members" unless further distinction is required.

Army careers, we were able to form a picture of the major sources of ESL instruction provided to these officers and enlisted members by the Army. This helped to ensure that the interview comments were interpreted in a well-grounded, realistic context.

During the interviews with officers' and enlisted members' supervisors, we asked each supervisor to complete a Language Activity Rating on the person under discussion. After the site visits had ended, in June 1988, we surveyed all officers (including those we had interviewed) by mail concerning their English language needs and preparation. Finally, we analyzed the information provided through the DLIELC records and the EMF and OMF.

We did not attempt to merge different kinds of data, such as DLIELC-reported ECLT scores and interview comments for a given officer. Much of the open-ended descriptive information would need to have been distorted beyond recognizability to permit this. However, all of the information was drawn from the same pool of officers and enlisted members. As a result, data from the different activities and records are complementary and should work together to provide a coherent picture. That picture is developed in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3. Officers' and Enlisted Members' Performance Measures

This chapter analyzes information provided from the records of DLIELC and from the EMF and OMF to describe the non-native English speaking officers and enlisted personnel who made up our sample, to examine their performance on tests of English fluency, and to explore the relationship between test performance and indicators of career success. The chapter begins with the data on officers.

Officers

Information provided from DLIELC records and from the OMF identified 799 officers commissioned or appointed in Puerto Rico since 1 January 1983. Of this group, 113 who were on the OMF had attended DLIELC; 440 on the OMF had not attended DLIELC; and 246 reported by DLIELC did not appear on the OMF. An officer would appear on the OMF list but not on the DLIELC list if he or she had not attended DLIELC. Officers on the DLIELC list who did not appear on the OMF were most likely to be (a) out of the service; (b) in the U.S. Army Reserves and not on active duty; (c) in the Puerto Rican Army National Guard or (d) recent DLIELC graduates whose change in status had not yet been forwarded to PERSINSCOM. This distribution allowed us to contrast several groups.

Description of the Officers

Service characteristics. Of the 553 officers listed on the OMF, approximately 20 percent were regular Army, 78 percent were active duty Army reservists, and 2 percent were in the National Guard (see Table 3.1). These distributions did not differ

TABLE 3.1. Service Characteristics of Officers
Attending and Not Attending DLIELC (N=553)

Characteristic	Total Percent	Attended DLIELC:		Not Attend DLIELC:	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Service Component					
Regular Army	20.4	21	18.6	92	20.9
Reserves	77.9	91	80.6	340	77.3
National Guard	1.6	1	0.9	8	1.8
Promotion Potential					
Potential	94.6	97	96.0	183	93.9
Risk	5.4	4	4.0	12	6.2
Military Education					
Warrant Officer - Senior, advanced, entry course	15.7	--	--	85	19.8
Combined Arms & Service Staff Schools (CAS3)	6.9	9	8.2	28	6.5
Staff College Level	0.2	--	--	1	0.2
Branch Advanced Course	8.9	10	9.0	38	8.9
Branch Basic Course	65.7	90	81.1	265	61.8
Specialist Course	2.6	2	1.8	12	2.8
Rank					
Warrant Officer 1	6.5	--	--	36	8.2
Chief Warrant Officer 2	8.9	--	--	49	11.1
2nd Lieutenant	11.4	10	8.9	53	12.1
1st Lieutenant	31.1	62	54.9	110	25.0
Captain	38.0	41	36.3	169	38.4
Major	2.5	--	--	14	3.2
Lt. Colonel	0.9	--	--	5	1.1
Colonel	0.7	--	--	4	0.9

substantially between those who had and had not attended DLIELC. Almost all (95%) were rated as having promotion potential.

Warrant officers accounted for the differences observed in military education. None of the warrant officers, who comprised about 15 percent of the group, had attended DLIELC; there is no restriction on their being sent to the school, and it seems probable that this group simply did not need English language instruction. The DLIELC group included a much higher proportion of first lieutenants (55%) than the non-DLIELC group (25%). These variations explained the higher percentage of non-DLIELC attendees who had completed warrant officer courses and the smaller proportion who had completed Branch Officer Basic Courses. Across the entire group, rank ranged from warrant officer (36 persons) to colonel (4). The most frequent rank was captain (210, or 38 percent).

Civilian education. As can be seen on Table 3.2, the officers as a group were most likely to have completed a bachelor's degree (73%) or professional degree (16%). There were some differences between those who had gone to DLIELC and those who had not. Among those attending DLIELC, 99 percent reported a baccalaureate. However, 21 percent of those not attending DLIELC were listed as holding professional degrees. These were generally in the medical fields, supporting the observation that Hispanic health care professionals are relatively unlikely to go to DLIELC.

The academic degrees represented a wide range of disciplines. The greatest numbers of officers had a degree in some area of business (24%), social studies (21%), physical sciences (15%), or medicine and surgery (14%). Again, only two of the more than 100 officers with training in health fields had attended DLIELC.

Rank and Test Performance

English language tests. Two tests of English language proficiency are used as criteria for graduation from DLIELC. One is the ECLT, a paper and pencil test that includes a listening section and a reading section. In the listening section students respond to tape-recorded questions. Scores on the ECLT can range from 0 to 100. However, any score below 26 is recorded as "0." To avoid inflating gains and deflating averages, we converted all scores of 0 to scores of 25, effectively giving the ECLT a range of 25 to 100. Officers at DLIELC are required to score 90 or more on two

consecutive trials as a criterion for graduation with a diploma; meeting the standard twice helps ensure that the score is not attributable to testing error. Our analysis used the first and last ECLT scores recorded for each officer as "entry" and "exit" measures.

TABLE 3.2. Educational Background of Officers
Attending and Not Attending DLIELC (N=480)

Factor	Total Percent	Attended DLIELC:		Not Attend DLIELC:	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Civilian Education Level					
High School or GED	0.4	--	--	2	0.5
< 2 years postsecondary	1.0	--	--	5	1.3
≥ 2 years postsecondary;					
Associate degree	6.6	1	0.9	31	8.2
Bachelors degree or attending	73.0	107	99.1	249	65.5
Professional degree (MD, DDS, etc.)	16.1	--	--	78	20.5
Masters degree or attending	3.0	--	--	15	3.9
Degree Area					
Humanities	5.2	2	1.9	23	6.2
Business	24.1	43	40.2	73	19.6
Engineering	5.2	6	5.6	19	5.1
Physical Sciences	15.4	18	16.8	56	15.0
Social Studies	21.3	33	30.8	69	18.5
Medical Allied	0.6	--	--	3	0.8
Medicine & Surgery	14.2	1	0.9	67	18.0
Veterinary Medicine	0.2	--	--	1	0.3
Dentistry	1.3	--	--	6	1.6
Nursing	6.5	1	0.9	30	8.0
Pharmacy	0.2	--	--	1	0.3
Law	1.7	--	--	8	2.1
Area not indicated	4.2	3	2.8	17	4.6
Total		107		373	

The OPI is an extended interview in which the student is encouraged to talk about things such as current events. The student is rated separately on comprehension and speaking ability (referred to in this report as subtests of the OPI) by a pair of trained interviewers. There are six levels of proficiency. At Level 0 speakers have no proficiency in the language. Level 1 speakers can handle everyday "survival" situations. At Level 2, speakers can participate fully in conversations and are readily understandable to native speakers who are unused to internationals. Level 3 speakers use complex sentence structures and a broad vocabulary. Their pronunciation and communication errors almost never interfere with others' understanding. Speakers at Level 4 rarely mispronounce words and have a high degree of fluency, while those at Level 5 cannot easily be distinguished from native English speakers. Only the first four levels (0-3) were included in the DLIELC sample. A "plus" mark added to the score indicates that at least 60 percent of the examinee's performance was at the next highest level. The score range for our sample was 0, 0+, 1, 1+, 2, 2+, and 3. This seven-point scale is converted on DLIELC's computerized records to a six-point scale of 0 to 5. The conversion step collapses the original "1+" and "2" ratings into a single value. Only exit scores in comprehension and speaking were reported.

Relationship to rank. Information about rank, OPI scores, and ECLT scores was available for 87 of the officers. Only second lieutenants, first lieutenants, and captains were included in the sample. The number and percent meeting the criterion for each test are shown in Table 3.3.

TABLE 3.3. Officers' Rank and ESL Test Performance
DLIELC Graduates With All Scores (N=87)

Rank	Number and Percent Meeting Criteria:					
	OPI Comprehension		OPI Speaking*		ECLT	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
2nd Lieutenant	5	71.4	7	100.0	10	100.0
1st Lieutenant	55	93.2	59	100.0	50	80.7
Captain	17	81.0	21	100.0	18	85.4
All Officers	77	88.5	87	100.0	78	89.7

*Percent meeting criterion is inflated because records collapsed criterion score of 2 with unsatisfactory score of 1+.

All of the officers appear to have achieved the criterion score of 2 on the OPI Speaking subtest; however, the DLIELC records collapsed scores of 2 with scores of 1+, so it is possible that some shown in this group did not achieve a score of 2. Some officers failed to achieve the required score on the OPI Comprehension subtest and the ECLT. Overall, about 11 percent of the officers did not achieve a score of 2+ in Comprehension on the OPI and about 10 percent did not score 90 or better on their final ECLT at DLIELC.

These findings do not demonstrate that performance on the OPI and ECLT are irrelevant to an officer's career progress. They do, however, show that the test scores are not absolute criteria of success. Some officers have achieved the ranks of first lieutenant and captain without meeting established test criteria. Thus, these test standards cannot be considered necessary conditions for success in the Army.

Performance at DLIELC

Table 3.4 examines the ratings and test scores earned by all 359 officers who attended DLIELC.

The instructors rated virtually every officer who was not absent as satisfactory or better in completion of assignments, attitude, class performance, motivation, progress, and advancement in the books that comprised the curriculum. The performance standard on the ECLT is 90. Some 21 percent of the officers had achieved this before entering DLIELC. After completing DLIELC, 76 percent of the officers met this standard.

A few officers (6%) showed a decrease in ECLT score between entrance and exit testing, suggesting that there is some error in the test. About half of the officers, however, gained up to 10 points and 11 percent showed gains of 21 points or more. It should be noted that different forms of the ECLT were administered fairly frequently. During the 16-week course the typical officer (48 percent of the group) was administered alternate forms of the ECLT from nine to 12 times. A small number (6%) took the test more than once a week.

TABLE 3.4. DLIELC Performance
Measures: Officers (N=359)

Test or Rating	Number	Percent
Assignments		
Absent	41	15.2
≥ Satisfactory	228	84.8
Attitude		
Absent	--	--
≥ Satisfactory	253	100.0
Class Performance		
Absent	41	15.2
≥ Satisfactory	228	84.8
Motivation		
Absent	41	15.2
≥ Satisfactory	228	84.8
Progress		
Absent	--	--
≥ Satisfactory	253	100.0
Book Advance		
Yes	257	95.5
No	12	4.5
ECLT Range	Entry	Exit
	<u>No.</u> <u>Pct.</u>	<u>No.</u> <u>Pct.</u>
< 26	1 0.3	1 0.3
26-79	131 36.7	10 2.8
80-89	149 41.7	75 21.0
90-94	51 14.3	114 31.9
≥ 95	25 7.0	157 44.0
Mean Score	81.2	92.0
ECLT Gains		
< 0 (decreased)	20	5.6
0-5 points	81	22.7
6-10 points	90	25.2
11-15 points	72	20.2
16-20 points	55	15.4
≥ 21 points	39	10.9

TABLE 3.4. (Cont.) DLIELC Performance
Measures: Officers (N=359)

<u>Test or Rating</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
ECLT Administration		
Tested 1-4 times	17	5.7
Tested 5-8 times	106	35.9
Tested 9-12 times	142	47.9
Tested 13-16 times	14	4.8
Tested \geq 17 times	17	5.7
OPI - Comprehension		
1+ or 2	35	13.8
2+	170	67.2
3	48	19.0
OPI - Speaking		
1	2	0.8
1+ or 2	132	52.2
2+	99	39.1
3	20	7.9

All but 14 percent of the officers met or exceeded the standard of 2+ on the comprehension subtest of the OPI by the time they left DLIELC. Because DLIELC record keeping collapsed the score of 2 that is the standard in the speaking subtest with the 1+ that is below this standard, it was not possible to say how many officers met the cut-off score in the speaking subtest. However, 47 percent scored 2+ or 3, and surpassed the standard.

Comparison of those listed or not listed on OMF. This sample was constructed by matching a group of officers who had attended DLIELC with those included in the current OMF. About two-thirds of the original DLIELC group were not later listed on the OMF, because they were inactive reservists, National Guard members, or no longer with the Army. Making the assumption that there was a limited number of active duty positions; and that ability was one determinant in selection for these; we used inclusion on the OMF as a crude indicator of "success." This assumption interpreted presence on the OMF as a sign of persistence and acceptable or better performance. Our next step was to examine whether any of the performance indicators recorded at DLIELC distinguished between these OMF and non-OMF groups. Since virtually all of the DLIELC students had received high ratings from the instructor evaluations, we limited this comparison to ECLT scores. Table 3.5 reports the results.

Officers who were listed on the OMF after completing their DLIELC program had slightly higher (about 3 points) performance on the ECLT than officers who were not later listed on the OMF. This was true for both entry and exit ECLT scores. Both groups had an average exit score slightly above the graduation standard -- 94 for the OMF group and 91 for the non-OMF group. However, a larger percentage of those not later listed on the OMF failed to meet the 90 standard: 28 percent as compared to 16 percent of those on the OMF.

It should be remembered that graduation with a diploma from DLIELC required meeting each of three test score criteria: 90 on the ECLT, 2+ in comprehension on the OPI, and 2 in speaking on the OPI. Of the officers for whom all of these test scores were available, 78 percent of those who were on the OMF met all of the criteria. However, 72 percent of those not on the OMF achieved the required standard on each test. Meeting graduation criteria did not distinguish those who were listed on the OMF from those who were not listed.

TABLE 3.5. Comparison of ECLT Performance, Officers
Later Listed/Not Listed on OMF (N=357)

Test	Listed on OMF (N=113)		Not Listed on OMF (N=244)	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Entry ECLT range				
< 26	--	--	1	0.4
26-79	35	31.0	96	39.3
80-89	54	47.8	95	38.9
90-94	18	15.9	33	13.5
≥ 95	6	5.3	19	7.8
Average score	83.0		80.4	
Exit ECLT range				
< 26	--	--	1	0.4
26-79	2	1.8	8	3.3
80-89	16	14.2	59	24.2
90-94	29	25.7	85	34.8
≥ 95	66	58.4	91	37.3
Average score	94.2		91.0	
ECLT Gains				
< 0 (decreased)	4	3.5	16	6.6
0-5 points	19	16.8	62	25.4
6-10 points	40	35.4	50	20.5
11-15 points	21	18.6	51	20.9
16-20 points	18	15.9	37	15.2
≥ 21 points	11	9.7	28	11.5
Average gain	11.2		10.7	
Meeting all ECLT and OPI Criteria				
Met criteria	68	78.2	120	72.3
Did not meet criteria	19	21.8	46	27.7
Missing data	26	--	80	--

Relationship among test scores. Table 3.6 reports the findings of an analysis of variance that tested the relationship between officers' ECLT exit score and their performance on the comprehension and speaking subtests of the OPI. The test was carried out to see if the ECLT and OPI appeared to be measuring the same (or related) abilities.

There was a relationship that did not appear to be a chance one² (PR < .0001) and that explained about 21 percent of the variance in ECLT scores. However, this was almost solely attributable to the comprehension subtest (PR < .001). The probability values associated with the relationship between ECLT score and score on the OPI speaking subtest, and the interaction of the speaking and comprehension subtests, were too high to rule out random occurrence (the chances were about one in four this might have been the case). The relationship between ECLT and OPI comprehension scores appears readily explainable, in that much of the ECLT is administered through tape-recorded oral questions in English. Responding to tape-recorded questions should be somewhat similar to responding to questions from a live interviewer. And, as the table shows, the relationship is a positive one. The higher the officer's score on the OPI, the higher the average ECLT score.

Summary: Findings About Officers

While using existing data reduces the disruptiveness often associated with field research, it limits the conclusions that can be drawn. DLIELC and OMF records are maintained for administrative purposes. The evaluation findings we draw from them are tentative ones, whose primary use is assisting decisions about future research or evaluation.

With that caveat in mind, the data suggest that the Army does need to have ESL instruction for potential officers: about one in five of those on the OMF had attended DLIELC. This instruction may serve to screen or create a holding pool of non-native English speaking officers: about two out of three attending DLIELC do not appear later on the OMF. Professional and technical skills (such as those possessed by medical staff)

²A probability value of .05 (5 or fewer chances in 100) was set as the level for statistical significance throughout this report.

TABLE 3.6. Variance in Officers' ECLT Exit Score Associated with OPI Comprehension and Speaking (N=253)

Source	Degrees Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	PR>F	R-Square
Model	6	1908.29	318.05	11.11	0.0001	0.213152
Error	246	7044.41	28.64			
Corrected total	252	8952.70				
Comprehension	2	397.82		6.95	0.0012	
Speaking	3	115.76		1.35	0.2596	
Interaction C&S	1	38.38		1.34	0.2481	

	No.	Pct.	ECLT Mean Score
Comprehension Level			
1+ or 2	35	13.8	87.14
2+	170	67.2	93.72
3	48	19.0	95.42
Speaking Level			
1	2	0.8	80.50
1+ or 2	132	52.2	91.48
2+	99	39.1	95.04
3	20	7.9	95.85

appear to override the need for English language instruction -- or, medical professionals are all fluent in the language.

There is little evidence that the ECLT and OPI are necessary or sufficient causes of minimal success as an officer. Some who failed the performance standards set for these tests are now serving as U.S. Army officers. Some who passed apparently are not active with the Army. Rank, which was our single indicator of career success, was not absolutely related to test performance. The information reported here suggests that before ECLT and OPI standard setting is considered, program administrators should first examine what English skills are related to success in the Army and whether the tests measure these skills.

Enlisted Members

The sample of enlisted personnel included a total of 1,668 who had enlisted in Puerto Rico and attended DLIELC since 1 September 1985; 978 of these were included in the EMF in March 1988.

Background Characteristics

Approximately 97 percent of the enlisted members who were included on the EMF were shown as active on the March 1988 EMF (Table 3.7)³. The most frequently reported ranks were E4 (43%) and E3 (34%); it should be kept in mind that these graduates of DLIELC had fewer than three years' experience at the time these data were collected.

Of those soldiers for whom an ethnic background was reported, 96 percent came from a Hispanic group. For almost half of the group (44%) ethnic background was not described. The great majority (94%) were male. Table 3.8 presents the civilian educational background of the sample. The soldiers were most likely to report a high school diploma as their highest level of education (56%), but sizable numbers had

³Numbers of soldiers vary from table to table because of missing data or because a variable (e.g., gender) is listed only on the EMF, which includes only a part of the sample of enlisted soldiers.

TABLE 3.7. Selected Background Characteristics
of Enlisted Members Having Attended
DLIELC (N=978)*

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Active/Inactive Status</u>		
Active	945	96.6
Separated	31	3.2
Dropped from rolls	2	0.2
<u>Rank</u>		
E1	77	7.9
E2	139	14.2
E3	328	33.5
E4	420	42.9
E5	11	1.1
E6	3	0.3
<u>Ethnic Background</u>		
Hispanic group	508	51.9
Not Hispanic group	38	3.9
Other, not described	432	44.2
<u>Gender</u>		
Female	55	5.6
Male	923	94.4

*From Enlisted Master File records of soldiers who had attended DLIELC.

TABLE 3.8. Civilian Education Level of Enlisted Members Enrolled in DLIELC* (N=978)

Highest Degree Attained	Total		Pct. of Rank at Each Level:					
	No.	Pct.	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
Less than high school	3	0.3	--	--	0.6	0.2	--	--
High school diploma	548	56.0	88.3	89.2	54.3	42.4	--	--
General Educational Dev't. (GED)	9	0.9	1.3	1.4	0.6	0.7	--	33.3
Some postsecondary	271	27.7	6.5	7.9	31.4	34.7	45.5	33.3
Associate Arts degree	18	1.8	1.3	0.7	1.5	2.6	--	--
Baccalaureate or beyond	129	13.2	2.6	0.7	11.6	19.3	54.5	33.3

*From Enlisted Master File records of soldiers who had attended DLIELC.

completed some postsecondary education (30%) or a baccalaureate degree (13%). Education level generally increased with rank. E5s and E6s were more likely than others to have some postsecondary education, while the proportions of those with a high school education were greatest among E1s and E2s.

Factors Associated with Rank

While there had been little time for the soldiers in this sample to advance in rank, the fact that the enlisted members ranged from E1 to E6 allowed some comparisons of factors associated with differences in military grade. (It should be kept in mind that a soldier could have entered DLIELC at a rank higher than E1.)

Table 3.9 shows the average levels of military aptitude and English language tests scores of enlisted soldiers at different ranks. The test levels use the pass/fail standards given by the Army. A GT of 100, for example, is required for reenlistment, while a score of 60 on an SQT is considered passing.

Higher rank was generally associated with meeting a test's passing criterion. Only 17 percent of the enlisted soldiers holding the rank of E1 or E2 scored at least 100 on the GT. However, 57 percent of those who were E5 or E6 met this criterion. The same finding held in general for SQT scores. Although the highest proportion of those passing

TABLE 3.9. Average Rank of Enlisted Members
by Test Criterion (N=905)*

Group	Total Number	Percent	By Rank: Percent Only			
			E1/E2 (N=177)	E3 (N=296)	E4 (N=418)	E5/E6 (N=14)
GT less than 100	628	69.4	84.2	72.3	59.5	42.9
GT 100 or more	277	30.6	16.8	27.7	40.5	57.1
SQT less than 60	626	69.2	7.7	39.3	21.8	14.3
SQT 60 or more	279	30.8	92.3	60.7	78.2	85.7
ECLT less than 70	22	2.4	17.6	8.6	0.7	0.0
ECLT 70 or more	883	97.6	82.4	91.4	99.3	100.0
OPI Comprehension below 1+	275	30.4	15.8	23.0	41.4	42.8
OPI Comprehension 1+ or more	630	69.6	84.2	77.0	58.6	57.2
OPI Speaking below 1	173	19.1	5.1	12.2	29.4	35.7
OPI Speaking 1 or more	732	80.9	94.9	87.8	70.6	64.3

*Soldiers appearing on both Enlisted Master File and DLIELC records.

the SQT was among the E1 and E2 group (92%), from E3 on the percentage passing the SQT increased steadily with rank.

Table 3.10 tests the statistical significance of these differences. It reports an analysis of variance that was conducted to answer two questions: how much of the variation in rank among this sample of soldiers can be explained by test performance and education? What is the probability that this relationship can be attributed to chance? The test revealed that 35 percent (the R-square value) of the variance in rank could be explained by a soldier's level of education and pass/fail performance on the GT, SQT, ECL and OPI tests. The probability of this happening by chance was less than 1 in 10,000 (PR>F 0.0001).

TABLE 3.10. Variance in Enlisted Members' Rank Associated with Test Performance and Education Level* (N=905)

Source	Degrees Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	PR>F	R-Square
Model	24	257.78	10.74	19.87	0.0001	0.351442
Error	880	475.76	0.54			
Corrected total	904	733.55				
GT pass/fail	1	6.80		12.57	0.0004	
SQT pass/fail	1	68.11		125.98	0.0001	
Education	12	89.25		13.76	0.0001	
ECLT pass/fail	1	3.15		5.83	0.0159	
Comprehen. pass/fail	5	9.33		3.45	0.0043	
Speak pass/fail	4	5.46		2.52	0.0396	

*Soldiers appearing on both Enlisted Master File and DLIELC records.

When the factors were examined individually, each had a probability value of less than .05. The strongest effects were shown for SQT pass/fail status and level of education. The weakest effects were for pass/fail status on the ECLT or speaking component of the OPI. The analysis of variance tests were conducted using the SAS general linear model; this procedure includes only cases for which all of the variables are complete. Note that the analysis is based on 905 soldiers. Some data were missing for the other 73 in the group. It should also be kept in mind that the analysis does not take into account the length of time enlisted personnel had been in the Army nor their rank upon entering DLIELC. These factors would plausibly explain more of the observed variance in rank.

Aptitude Test Performance

The EMF provided information about performance on the AFQT and other ASVAB composites for the enlisted members, and these figures are shown on Table 3.11. While none of the soldiers scored in the lowest categories on the AFQT, about 83 percent scored below the 50th percentile. Put differently, 17 percent were above average on this test.

TABLE 3.11. Military Aptitude Test Performance of Enlisted Members Having Attended DLIELC* (N=978)

Test	Number	Percent
AFQT Percentile (976)**		
Category 1: 93-99	1	0.1
Category 2: 65-92	30	3.1
Category 3A: 50-64	135	13.8
Category 3B: 31-49	700	71.6
Category 4A: 21-30	109	11.2
Category 4B: 16-20	1	0.1
Category 4C: 10-15	--	--
Category 5: 1-9	--	--
Auditory Perception Score (7)		
0-84	3	42.9
≥ 85	4	57.1
Clerical Apt. Score (921)		
0-84	25	2.7
≥ 85	896	97.3
Combat Apt. Score (921)		
0-84	72	7.8
≥ 85	849	92.2
Motor Mechanic Apt. Score (921)		
0-84	66	7.2
≥ 85	855	92.8
Food Operations Apt. Score (921)		
0-84	64	6.9
≥ 85	857	93.1
Skilled Tech. Apt. Score (922)		
0-84	134	14.5
≥ 85	788	85.5
Battery Electrician Apt. Score (921)		
0-84	49	5.3
≥ 85	872	94.7
Field Artillery Apt. Score (921)		
0-84	22	2.4
≥ 85	899	97.6
Gen'l Maintenance Apt. Score (921)		
0-84	131	14.2
≥ 85	790	85.8

TABLE 3.11. (Cont.) Military Aptitude Test Performance
of Enlisted Members Having Attended DLIELC* (N=978)

Test	Number	Percent
General Technical Apt. Score (947)		
0-99	653	69.0
100-109	196	20.7
≥ 110	98	10.3

*Soldiers appearing on both Enlisted Master File and DLIELC records.

**Number for whom test score is reported shown in parentheses.

The minimum composite score to qualify for entry into numerous MOSs is 85. In general, the enlisted personnel exceeded this standard. Of the small number taking the Auditory Perception test, 57 percent met the cut-off of 85. Better than 90 percent of those tested passed the aptitude composites for Clerical, Combat, Motor Mechanics, Food Operations, and Battery Electrician work. More than 80 percent succeeded in the Skilled Technical and General Maintenance Aptitude composite. However, only 31 percent met the criterion of 100 or better on the GT.

SQT performance is shown on Table 3.12 (it was reported for about one-third of the soldiers). In this area, more than half of the enlisted members tested scored in the bottom quartile of the test for their MOS. Only one in four had better than average (above the 50th percentile) performance. But, three-fourths (76%) met the SQT test standard of 60 for their primary MOS.

TABLE 3.12. Skill Qualification Test (SQT)
Performance of Enlisted Members Having
Attended DLIELC* (N=365)

Score	Number	Percent
Primary MOS-SQT Percentile		
0-25	191	52.3
26-50	78	21.4
51-75	60	16.4
76-100	36	9.9
Primary MOS-SQT Score		
0-59	86	23.6
≥ 60	279	76.4

*Soldiers appearing on both Enlisted Master File and DLIELC records.

ECLT correlation with aptitude tests. Because the soldiers appeared generally successful on these Army job aptitude tests, we asked whether ECLT performance was related to the other measures. The correlations are reported on Table 3.13 for the SQT and GT. A correlation of 1.00 between two factors means that they are perfectly correlated: knowing the value of one allows you to predict exactly the value of the other. A correlation of 0.00 means that no relationship is discernible. Given that the job aptitude tests are written in English, we anticipated a higher correlation with the ECLT than the 0.15 observed for the soldier's primary MOS SQT score and the 0.10 observed for the GT. The information on the bottom half of Table 3.13 shows that three-fourths of the soldiers (76%) "passed" both the ECLT and the SQT for their MOS. However, only 30 percent scored 70 or better on the ECLT and 100 or more on the GT. About 5 percent of the soldiers for whom scores were available failed both of these tests.

DLIELC Performance Measures

The enlisted members were given high ratings by their instructors at DLIELC (see Table 3.14). This table compares 651 soldiers who attended DLIELC but did not appear later on the EMF with 912 who were shown on both records. Although some who did not appear on the EMF could have graduated from DLIELC too recently for their records to catch up with them, we are assuming that the "not on EMF" group is less successful than the "listed on EMF" group. This is a crude way to define success, but it is as accurate as we can be using existing databases. Overall, more than 85 percent of all soldiers were given ratings of satisfactory or better on completing their assignments, attitude, performance in class, motivation, progress, and advance in the books comprising the ESL course. The ratings were slightly higher in all categories for those who were on the EMF records, with the greatest contrast in the area of class performance.

DLIELC attendees who were later reported on the EMF also had better ECLT performance. Of this group, 83 percent entered DLIELC with an ECLT score of less than 70, but only 7 percent left DLIELC without meeting this criterion. Among those who did not appear later on the EMF, 86 percent entered and 30 percent left DLIELC with ECLT

TABLE 3.13. Correlation of ECLT Exit Score with SQT
and GT: Enlisted Members* (N=978)

Correlation of Exit ECLT Score with:	Number Observations		Correlation Coefficient	Probability of Correlation
Primary MOS SQT Score	365		0.150	0.0041
General/Technical (GT) Score	946		0.097	0.0030
	ECLT <70 (Fail)		ECLT ≥70 (Pass)	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>PMOS (N=365)</u>				
PMOS-SQT <60 (Fail)	3	0.8	83	22.7
PMOS-SQT ≥60 (Pass)	0	--	279	76.4
<u>GT (N=946)</u>				
GT <100 (Fail)	50	5.3	602	63.6
GT ≥100 (Pass)	15	1.6	279	29.5

*Soldiers appearing on both Enlisted Master File and DLIELC records.

TABLE 3.14. DLIELC Performance Measures: Enlisted Members Later Listed/Not Listed on EMF* (N=1563)

Test or Rating	Not on EMF:		On EMF:	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Assignments				
≥ Satisfactory	593	91.1	893	97.9
Other	58	8.9	19	2.1
Attitude				
≥ Satisfactory	614	96.5	905	100.0
Other	22	3.5	--	--
Class Performance				
≥ Satisfactory	564	86.6	889	97.5
Other	87	13.4	23	2.5
Motivation				
≥ Satisfactory	579	89.0	889	97.5
Other	72	11.0	23	2.5
Progress				
≥ Satisfactory	594	93.4	902	99.7
Other	42	6.6	3	0.3
Book Advance				
Yes	589	90.5	884	96.9
No	62	9.5	28	3.1
ECLT Entry**				
0-69	591	86.0	806	82.5
≥ 70	96	14.0	171	17.5
ECLT Exit				
0-69	206	30.0	69	7.1
≥ 70	481	70.0	908	92.9
Averages	(N=687)		(N=977)	
ECLT Entry	47.2	--	55.5	
ECLT Exit	64.8	--	74.2	
ECLT Gain	17.6	--	18.7	
OPI-Comprehension**				
0-1	294	46.2	275	30.4
1+-3	342	53.8	630	69.6

TABLE 3.14. (Cont.) DLIELC Performance Measures: Enlisted Members Later Listed/Not Listed on EMF* (N=1563)

Test or Rating	Not on EMF:		On EMF:	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
OPI-Speaking				
0-0+	224	35.2	173	19.1
1-3	412	64.8	732	80.9

*Separates enlisted members attending DLIELC into those subsequently included/not included in Enlisted Master File.

**English Comprehension Level Test score of 70 required for DLIELC graduation. Oral Proficiency Interview - graduation requires scores of 1+ (Comprehension) and 1 (Speaking).

scores of less than 70.⁴ The differences in exit scores are largely explainable by entry performance. The average points gained in DLIELC were about the same for both groups: 17.6 for those who did not appear on the EMF and 18.7 points for those who did. Enlisted members who did not appear on the EMF after leaving DLIELC did not perform as well as their peers on the OPI. On comprehension, about 70 percent of the group shown on the EMF had a score of 1+ or better, in contrast with the 54 percent of the group not shown on the EMF who had at least this score. Speaking test results were similar: 65 percent of those not on the EMF and 81 percent of those on the EMF met the criterion score of 1.

Gain and time in DLIELC. Once enlisted personnel have been at DLIELC for six weeks, they can be released any time after they have met the test standards on the ECLT (70) and the OPI (1+/1). The length of time soldiers spent in DLIELC and whether they had scores of 70 or better when they entered were related to test gains (Table 3.15). These two factors explained about 40 percent of the variance in gain among the 1,540 soldiers for whom information was available. Those who had an entry score of less than 70 had average gains four times greater than those who entered with a score of 70 or above: 21.8 points versus 5.2 points. Those with entry scores of less than 70 also spent almost twice as long in DLIELC (11.7 weeks) as their higher-scoring peers (6.1 weeks) and gained an average of 1.9 points per week.

ECLT and OPI relationships. The analysis of variance reported in Table 3.16 shows that OPI comprehension and speaking scores explain about 25 percent of the variance in exit ECLT scores of soldiers at DLIELC, and that the relationship is not a chance occurrence (PR < .0001). However, most of this is attributable to score on the comprehension component of the OPI. The probability that OPI comprehension is related to ECLT exit score meets the .05 criterion (PR < .048). However, the probability levels are too high to rule out chance in looking at the effects of the speaking test (PR < .427) and the possible interaction of comprehension and speaking (PR < .732). This is despite the fact that the average ECLT score increases consistently across the range of comprehension and speaking scores.

⁴Note that a score of 70 on the ECLT is required for enlisted members to graduate from DLIELC. Also, DLIELC records any ECLT score of less than 26 as a "0." To avoid inflating gains, we converted all 0 scores to 25. This resulted in a stringent measure of gains, but had no effect on measures of passing rates.

TABLE 3.15. Variance in ECLT Gain Associated with Time in DLIELC and Entry Score* (N=1540)

Source	Degrees Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	PR>F	R-Square
Model	2	148429.18	74214.59	519.42	0.0001	0.403302
Error	1537	219605.52	142.88			
Corrected total	1539					
Weeks in DLIELC	1	91205.27		638.34	0.0001	
Entry ECLT pass/fail	1	13171.21		92.18	0.0001	

Group	Number	Avg. ECLT Gain	Avg. Weeks DLIELC	Gain/Week
Entry ECLT <70	1291	21.75	11.71	1.86
Entry ECLT ≥70	249	5.19	6.11	1.18
Total	1540	19.07	10.80	

*All soldiers.

TABLE 3.16. Variance in Enlisted Members' ECLT Exit Score
Associated with OPI Comprehension and Speaking (N=1540)

Source	Degrees Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	PR>F	R-Square
Model	15	88833.15	5922.21	33.57	0.0001	0.248359
Error	1524	268847.01	176.41			
Corrected total	1539	357680.17				
Comprehension	5	1972.86		2.24	0.0484	
Speaking	5	867.06		0.98	0.4267	
Interaction C&S	5	493.04		0.56	0.7315	

	Number	ECLT Mean Score
Comprehension Level		
0	36	43.06
0+	236	61.07
1	297	68.51
1+ or 2	914	75.30
2+	49	77.71
3	8	87.13
Speaking Level		
0	51	40.12
0+	346	64.55
1	750	73.41
1+ or 2	370	76.56
2+	21	79.86
3	2	97.50

Other DLIELC Factors

Our last analysis (Table 3.17) examined several factors other than academic performance at DLIELC that might explain differences between enlisted personnel who later were included on the EMF and those who were not. There appeared to be no meaningful difference in the ranks of soldiers in the two groups while they were at DLIELC; for both, almost all soldiers were either E1s or E3s. Those who later appeared on the EMF were far more likely, however, to have been regular Army enlistees (98%) while the others were more likely to have been reservists (68%). More than anything else, this implies that a number of those who attended DLIELC as a part of the U.S. Army reserves simply kept that inactive status after completing their English language instruction. Whether their slightly lower performance on the tests of English fluency had any relationship to their maintaining this status cannot be determined.

Causality does seem more probable, however, in the last factor that was examined: reason for leaving DLIELC. Some 99 percent of those in the EMF group left because they had graduated. This was true for only 71 percent of those not shown on the EMF. Among those enlisted soldiers, 21 percent left because of academic difficulties and 5 percent because of medical problems.

Summary: Findings About Enlisted Members

This chapter has assembled information from two data sources that were established for administrative rather than research purposes. As a result, much of the argument has been by inference. The findings summarized here are subject to the same limitations as those discussed earlier for the data about officers.

The major conclusion drawn from the information presented so far is that performance on the ECLT and OPI is neither a necessary nor sufficient cause for adequate performance in the Army. Non-native English speaking enlisted members who attended DLIELC scored relatively low on the AFQT and its subtests when compared to the norms for these tests, but they generally met the cut-off scores. The ECLT and OPI are among the measures correlated with enlisted members' rank (along with GT and SQT performance and level of education), but the relationship was negative for both the comprehension and speaking subtests of the OPI. The ECLT did have a positive, albeit weak, correlation with

TABLE 3.17. Rank, Service Component and Reason
for Leaving DLIELC: Enlisted Members
Listed/Not Listed on EMF* (N=1668)

Factor	Not on EMF:		On EMF:	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Rank while at DLIELC				
E1	342	49.6	442	45.2
E2	46	6.7	63	6.4
E3	301	43.6	469	48.0
E4	--	--	1	0.1
E5	--	--	--	--
E6	1	0.1	3	0.3
Component				
Regular Army	204	29.6	957	98.3
Reserve	466	67.6	17	1.7
National Guard	19	2.8	--	--
Have left DLIELC because:				
Graduated	467	71.4	894	99.2
Academic difficulties	134	20.5	6	0.7
Medical problems	30	4.6	1	0.1
Disciplinary problem	3	0.5	--	--
Recalled home	2	0.3	--	--
Compassionate reasons	5	0.8	--	--
Administrative reasons	13	2.0	--	--

*Percents based on number for whom information was reported.

GT and SQT performance. It had a slightly greater correlation with the comprehension, but not the speaking, subtest of the OPI. Since soldiers must answer tape-recorded questions when they take the ECLT this correlation seems logical.

Finally, if the soldiers who attend DLIELC but do not later appear on the EMF are taken as an approximation of an "attrition" or "non-career" group, they do show somewhat lower performance and a greater incidence of academic difficulties at DLIELC than do their colleagues who persist in the regular Army. Attriting or non-career enlisted soldiers both enter and exit with lower ECLT scores.

Selection tests are intended to make yes-no, or select-reject, decisions. The more accurately they make these decisions, the better. The standards now in use on the ECLT and the OPI do not distinguish to any great extent between soldiers who will remain and those who will leave the Army. The 7 percent who did not meet the ECLT criterion, 30 percent who failed the comprehension subtest of the OPI, and 19 percent who did not achieve the OPI criterion in speaking are now functioning in the Army. Others who met all of these standards at DLIELC are not now carried on the EMF and are therefore presumably no longer in the active Army.

At best, the ECLT and OPI join with Army aptitude tests and level of education to explain differences in enlisted members' ranks. At worst, the OPI has a negative correlation with rank and the ECLT has a weak positive relationship with rank and with the SQT and GT. The OPI and ECLT themselves appear to measure different factors. The question here does not seem to be whether the standards set on the ECLT are appropriate but whether the tests themselves are defensible screening devices.

Chapter 4. Interview Findings: English Language Preparation for Officers

This chapter discusses the communication needs and the adequacy of English language preparation of non-native English speaking Puerto Rican officers from the point of view of the officers themselves and their supervisors. This discussion is based on data from interviews with officers and supervisors and on supervisors' ratings of officers' performance.

The kind of information presented in this chapter is different from that discussed in the preceding chapter. Here, we summarize the opinions, beliefs and perceptions of the officers and supervisors. While this information is subjective, people's actions and behavior are based on their beliefs and perceptions of the world, and the comments of these officers and supervisors contribute to providing a comprehensive picture of the English language preparation of officers.

From January through April 1988, we interviewed 45 Puerto Rican officers at nine sites: 34 officers at eight Army posts, and eleven officers attending DLIELC at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. We also interviewed 23 supervisors of the officers at Army posts, and had these supervisors complete Language Activity Ratings.

Identifying the Sample of Officers and Arranging the Interviews

Our sample of officers included those who were commissioned, appointed, or who went on active duty status in Puerto Rico since January 1983 to the present, including both those who had and had not attended DLIELC. It also included officers who were attending DLIELC at the time of our visit. The cut-off date of January 1983 was chosen because the English language training program for Puerto Rican lieutenants started at DLIELC at this time.

We identified 553 officers meeting these criteria from the OMF provided by PERSINSCOM. Of these officers, 294 were listed as being at Army posts in the United States. We selected eight of the Army posts as sites for interviews on the basis of efficiency: those that had relatively large numbers of potential interviewees, or those that we planned to visit for other evaluation activities. A total of 95 non-native English speaking officers were listed at these eight sites. Limited time and resources permitted us to interview only about half of these officers. Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the officers interviewed by site and by whether they attended DLIELC.

TABLE 4.1. Location of Officers Interviewed and Whether They Attended DLIELC (N=45)

Site	Attended DLIELC:		Total
	Yes	No	
Fort Benning	3	4	7
Fort Bliss	1	3	4
Fort Bragg	3	3	6
Fort Gordon	3	4	7
Fort Lewis	0	3	3
Fort Leonard Wood	1	1	2
Fort Riley	2	0	2
Fort Sill	3	0	3
Total at Army posts	16	18	34
DLIELC	11	--	11
Total	27	18	45

Interviews with the supervisors of the officers were held after asking the officers for permission to conduct these interviews.

Characteristics of the Officers

We interviewed a wide range of officers at different stages in their careers in the Army. Six of the interviewees were women.

As shown in Table 4.2, all officers interviewed at Army posts were at permanent party except for four who were attending their Branch Officer Basic Course (BOBC), and one who was attending Branch Officer Advanced Course (BOAC). Nine officers were in the regular Army, 15 had reserve active duty status, and 21 did not comment on their status.

TABLE 4.2. Status and Current Situation of Officers* (N=45)

Status	Current Situation									
	DLIELC		BOBC		BOAC		Permanent Party		Total	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Regular Army	--	--	--	--	--	--	9	20.0	9	20.0
Reserve Active Duty	3	6.0	--	--	--	--	12	27.0	15	33.0
Missing Data	8	18.0	4	9.0	1	2.0	8	18.0	21	47.0
Total	11	24.0	4	9.0	1	2.0	29	65.0	45	100.0

*In this table and in those that follow, percentages are rounded off to the first decimal point. While there is a small number of officers in our sample, percentages are used to illustrate the size of each sub-group of officers relative to the total number in the sample.

Officers also gave their ranks and sources of commissioning or appointment. Table 4.3 shows that none of the officers had a rank higher than Captain; there were 15 second lieutenants, 14 first lieutenants, eleven captains, and three warrant officers. Most of the officers had been commissioned through ROTC in Puerto Rico (36), while nine had received commissions or appointments through other sources (Warrant Officer School, Officer Candidate School, nursing or medical school, etc.).

TABLE 4.3. Sources of Commissioning or Appointment and Ranks of Officers (N=45)

Source of Commissioning	2nd Lt.		1st Lt.		Capt.		WO1		Missing Data		Total	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
ROTC	14	31.1	12	26.7	8	17.8	--	--	2	4.4	36	80.0
Directly commissioned as doctor, nurse, or chaplain	1	2.2	--	--	2	4.4	--	--	--	--	3	6.7
Officer Candidate School (OCS)	--	--	1	2.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	2.2
Warrant Officer School	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	6.7	--	--	3	6.7
Missing Data	--	--	1	2.2	1	2.2	--	--	--	--	2	4.4
TOTAL	15	33.3	14	31.1	11	24.4	3	6.7	2	4.4	45	100.0

Over half of the interviewees (25) said they had not lived in the continental U.S. before joining the Army. Others had lived in the continental U.S. for varying amounts of time, as indicated in Table 4.4. One of these had lived in Puerto Rico for only one year before going on active duty.

TABLE 4.4. Length of Time Officers Lived in the Continental U.S. Before Joining the Army (N=45)

Time in Continental U.S.	Number of Officers	
	No.	Pct.
Never lived in U.S.	25	55.6
Lived in U.S. for:		
One to five years	6*	13.3
Six to ten years	3	6.7
Eleven or more years	3	6.7
Missing Data	8	17.8
Total	45	100.1

*Two of these were born in the continental U.S. and moved to Puerto Rico after one year.

The officers at Army posts reported how long they had been on active duty in the Army. Thirteen of these had military experience as enlisted personnel. Table 4.5 shows the total length of time these Army personnel had been on active duty, and how long they had been on active duty as officers.

TABLE 4.5. Total Length of Time on Active Duty in the Army (N=34)

Length of Time	As Officers and Enlisted Personnel Combined		As Officers Only	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Less Than One Year	3	8.8	4	11.8
One to 3.9 Years	11	32.4	16	47.1
Four to 5.9 Years	9	26.5	8	23.5
Six to 14 Years	9	26.5	1	2.9
Missing Data	2	5.9	5	14.7
Total	34	100.1	34	100.0

The four who had been on active duty as officers for less than one year were attending BOBC. Almost one-half of the officers had been on active duty as officers from one to 3.9 years. Over half of the officers had four or more years of combined officer and enlisted military experience, but less than one-third of these Army personnel reported having four or more years of active duty experience *as officers only*.

Four officers also reported having been on reserve inactive status in Puerto Rico as officers or enlisted personnel from one and one-half to four and one-half years. Two of these had been reserve officers with the Puerto Rican Army National Guard.

Those interviewed at DLIELC had been attending the school anywhere from three days to 16 weeks, and most had been there from two to six weeks, as shown in Table 4.6.

TABLE 4.6. Length of Time Officers Interviewed at DLIELC Had Been Attending DLIELC (N=11)

Length of Time	Officers	
	No.	Pct.
Three Days	1	9.1
Two to Three Weeks	3	27.3
Five to Six Weeks	5	45.5
Eleven to 16 Weeks	2	18.2
Total	11	100.1

Interviewers informally noted the level of English proficiency of most of the officers in our sample (33 officers at Army posts and five at DLIELC). Of those interviewed at Army posts, about two-thirds (22) were fluent in English, and four of these had no trace of a Spanish accent. Twelve of the officers at Army posts and at DLIELC made errors of some sort (in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary), but were still easily understandable, while four were difficult to understand because of pronunciation problems or grammatical errors.

Conducting the Interviews

Protocols containing general questions were used to guide the interviews with officers and supervisors. Officers were asked about their experiences learning and using

English prior to joining and during their Army careers, whether they felt their English was sufficient to perform in their current jobs, and in what areas they felt they needed to improve. Supervisors were asked similar questions about their experiences working with non-native English speaking Puerto Rican officers. Copies of the interview protocols appear in Appendix B.

Each interview lasted from 30 minutes to one hour, depending on how much time was available. In general, although interviewers were guided by the same set of questions, not all questions were asked of all interviewees. For example, one interviewee, born and raised in the U.S. and fluent in English, was not asked whether he felt his English was adequate to perform his job.

Interviews with Officers

Experiences Learning English

Most interviewees (38) cited experiences in which they had an opportunity to learn English before becoming Army officers. Seven officers said that they had gone to private elementary or high schools in Puerto Rico where all instruction was in English, and two of these mentioned having an American instructor who had encouraged them to speak English. One officer said that he had learned English as a student attending Department of Defense schools while growing up. About one-fourth of the officers (10) said that they had learned some English while living in the continental United States. Others (13) mentioned attending college, ROTC or the English Technical Language School (ETLS),⁵ having English-speaking friends or relatives, reading books, or going to movies as sources for learning English.

About half of the officers (20) mentioned that they had taken English in Puerto Rico from elementary school through college, but most agreed that these classes were not very helpful. The English classes usually focused on grammar and reading, and did not provide

⁵This is now called the Puerto Rican Army National Guard - Language Center (PRARNG-LC).

many opportunities to speak English. Several interviewees said that while the textbooks were in English, more Spanish than English was spoken in these classes.

Over half of the officers (25) commented on the experiences in their lives that helped them the most to learn English. Seventeen officers cited getting help from friends, co-workers, or spouses, using English in their Army jobs, being forced to learn English to handle the demands of a training situation such as Basic Camp, Advanced Camp, or BOBC, and living and using English in the U.S. Two felt that they learned the most English by reading or going to movies. Two others said that their most valuable experience came from formal instruction; they found the oral communication practice at ETLS or DLIELC helpful, especially in giving briefings.

The Importance of English in Officers' Jobs and for Their Success in the Army

About three-fourths of the officers at Army posts commented on the importance of English to their jobs and for success as an officer. All said that English was very important, and about one-third said that English proficiency was especially important for evaluations and promotions.

Most of these officers (24) specified which English communication skills were most important in their jobs. One half of them said that speaking and writing were equally important, while seven said that speaking was more important than writing. Four felt that all English communication skills were essential.

Many officers viewed writing as crucial to their careers, since those who make career decisions are often likely to know officers through their written work. One said that writing was most essential in his job, and that it would become increasingly important as he progressed in his Army career. The most frequently cited kinds of documents that officers needed to write were Enlisted Evaluation Reports (EERs), Officer Evaluation Reports (OERs), award recommendations, and other reports.

Officers cited other qualities that were important for success in the Army. Some of the most frequently cited qualities were commitment, leadership, creativity, confidence, and the ability to command.

Officers' English Language Proficiency

Most officers at Army posts (29) commented on whether they felt that their English was adequate to perform their jobs. (Officers with native English-speaking proficiency and those at DLIELC were not asked this question.) All felt that their English was sufficient, although many of the interviewees (23) said they wanted to improve their English in at least one area. Officers most frequently said that they wanted to improve their writing (10) and their accent or pronunciation (9).

One officer asserted that poor writing could be a potential barrier to progress in his career, and another felt that she could write well enough for the demands of her current rank, but that she would need to work on her written skills in order to move up. This officer's supervisor confirmed that her writing had gotten better over time, but that it still needed to improve. Another officer paid more attention to his writing because he felt that people expected him to write poorly because he was a non-native speaker of English. He said that friends had been writing OERs, EERs and awards incorrectly until they learned how to do them right at BOAC. Finally, one officer was afraid he would have to leave the Army if he failed the "Army writing" course he was taking at the time of the interview.

Only one of the officers who were concerned about accent or pronunciation actually had an accent strong enough to make him occasionally difficult to understand. The others spoke understandable English and had only slight or moderate Spanish accents. Most of these officers were concerned that communication problems related to accents would interfere with getting good jobs in the Army or with their careers. Others made comments revealing a strong desire to get rid of their accent completely, regardless of how minimal it was, and to speak English just as a native speaker would, implying that it was not appropriate for officers to speak with any kind of non-standard accent. Officers commented, "If your accent gets in the way, you might have a problem;" I want to "try to get that accent away, try to speak more fluently;" The "Spanish accent does not fit with what I'm doing now." Another officer, a doctor who was fluent with only a slight accent, said that some of his patients had requested to be treated by someone else; he felt this was because he was not a native speaker of English.

Ten officers said they had been made fun of, or that they believed their intelligence or competence was overlooked if they had an accent or other problems with English. One said that a non-native English speaker might be thought of as a "dud" if his English wasn't good, at least until people got to know him. Others felt that they were regarded as "stupid," "dumb," "retarded" or "unprofessional" because of their lack of native fluency in English. Another said that she was the last choice for some jobs because of her level of English ability. She saw this as a vicious circle -- if she was not given a chance to show what she could do, how could she improve? These feelings were reflected in the comment of a supervisor who felt that if an officer was not proficient in English, it might appear that the officer was not bright, and "it could be a serious setback."

Six officers at Army posts (18%) said they were being or had gotten marked down in communication skills on their evaluations at some point in their Army careers. One of these had received a few poor evaluations at the beginning of his career, but as his English improved over time, so too did his evaluations. He noted that "I had patient supervisors: I was lucky."

Five officers who had received poor evaluations felt that English limitations or interpersonal difficulties reflected adversely on their overall OER ratings. Two said that the evaluations did not adequately reflect their competence in English or in their jobs. One of them generally felt that the OER was too subjective; the other reported that he was put in a branch for which he was unprepared, so he stopped talking, and his supervisor mistook this behavior for problems with English.

Another officer, who acknowledged initial problems with English but who felt that his English had improved over time, said that he had received poor evaluations earlier in his career. Although both he and his supervisor agreed that his English had improved a great deal, the "2s" he had received on earlier evaluations contributed to his current ineligibility for extending his contract. He said that "95 per cent of the people who learn English in Puerto Rico or at DLI, they'll leave the military." His current supervisor said that he had no problems with this officer, but noted that the officer's former supervisor "didn't see eye to eye" with him.

Four officers also noted that native speakers did not like them speaking Spanish among themselves, but did not mention whether they felt this had any effect on their job performance or their careers.

A few of the officers we interviewed said that they were taking advantage of other formal opportunities to learn English. One was attending a correspondence course on writing, and had also benefitted from a writing class at BOBC with native English speakers. One planned to attend English classes to prepare for going back to college.

Officers' Experiences at DLIELC

The 16 officers at Army posts who had attended DLIELC and the 11 officers interviewed at the school told us about their experiences with the program. About half of these officers (13) said that they liked DLIELC in general, but most (22) commented on areas that might be improved. Only two felt that DLIELC was "not too good." Comments from those interviewed at DLIELC tended to be more specific than those of officers interviewed at other sites.

Five officers cited their classes, teachers, and textbooks as helpful, or said that DLIELC provided a good opportunity to get used to hearing or speaking English, or that it helped them to gain confidence in using the language. Three said that it helped them to overcome cultural differences, or to adjust to the military environment. Five others felt that DLIELC helped them to learn more vocabulary and grammar, three thought that DLIELC gave them a good review of English skills they had already learned, and one felt that it helped him with listening skills.

A third of the interviewees who had attended DLIELC (nine) felt that, overall, the instruction was not challenging enough. Many of these said that they had received similar English instruction in high school. Those who had taken English in ROTC had used the same textbooks as those used at DLIELC. According to one, the school was "a good course for people who don't have a base in English," but Puerto Ricans have already had instruction in English from the sixth grade through college. For some it was "a total loss of Army time . . . they just had a good time." Another said, "I was disappointed [with] that school . . . we're talking about maybe seventh grade English. The level was too slow They started almost from zero."

Eleven officers said that they had wanted more practice speaking English at DLIELC. Four of these specifically felt that the school should focus more on teaching pronunciation. Ten officers (seven of whom were interviewed at DLIELC) felt that there was not enough opportunity to speak English outside of class, or that there was not enough access to social activities that would provide opportunities to speak English. Most of these officers felt that the opportunities to speak English were further limited by the fact that Spanish-speaking Army personnel were kept together as a group, segregated from Air Force personnel and from the allied forces students. Three officers said that it was difficult to get practice speaking English because, according to one, "everybody speaks Spanish in San Antonio." Two officers suggested moving the school to different states, such as Wisconsin or Minnesota.

Three officers expressed an interest in the English instruction that the allied forces were receiving. One had the impression that the program for allied forces was more rigorous: "They have to study more than we do." Another said that he would prefer to take classes with the foreign students, because he would be forced to speak English in order to communicate with them.

Three officers said that they appreciated getting practice at DLIELC in giving speeches and briefings, especially when these activities were videotaped and then critiqued. However, one officer said that it wasn't until her fifth week at DLIELC that she gave her first prepared speech. She would have preferred to give more speeches, and to start doing them earlier in the course.

While two officers felt that there was too much emphasis on writing at DLIELC, three said that they appreciated the writing instruction they received. One mentioned having a good teacher who assigned writing tasks related to current events, and who critiqued the students' work. Five officers suggested that DLIELC offer more writing instruction. Officers in the field said that they needed more preparation in writing documents that were required at BOBC and at their jobs, such as letters, reports, award recommendations, Disposition Forms, memos, and so on.

Four officers interviewed at DLIELC felt that too much class time was spent on grammar exercises or learning grammar rules, and two felt that too much time was spent

on reviewing vocabulary. According to one officer, "You can learn all the grammar, but if you don't have the opportunity to produce, what's the point?" Those who felt that too much emphasis was placed on vocabulary said that they already knew a good portion of the words being taught.

Comments about the ECLT and the OPI

The ECLT and OPI are two measures used to assess the English language proficiency of cadets and commissioned officers. The ECLT is used as a "gate" to screen cadets and officers at different stages in their ROTC and Army careers. During ROTC, cadets need to attain a score of 70 to attend Basic Camp and to contract, a 75 to attend Advanced Camp, and an 80 to be commissioned. There is no OPI requirement for commissioning, although the Army requires that the OPI be administered to cadets at some point. Generally those who receive between 80 and 90 on the ECLT are sent to DLIELC before going to BOBC. To graduate from DLIELC, officers need to attain a score of 90 on the ECLT and an OPI rating of 2+ on comprehension and a 2 on speaking (2+/2).

Almost half of the officers (22) commented on the adequacy of these measures for assessing their English language proficiency.

The ECLT

Eighteen officers commented on the ECLT. While one officer said that the ECLT helped to improve his listening skills, most of the officers were critical of the test. Eight of the interviewees felt that it did not assess one's ability to communicate in English, and a few said that the pressure to increase their ECLT score detracted somewhat from their real goal of learning to speak and use English correctly. Officers agreed that the English of non-native speakers needed to be assessed, but many felt that a test of English proficiency primarily should measure speaking and writing skills, as these were the abilities they needed and used in their jobs. According to one officer, "it is possible to get a good score on the ECLT, but your English may not be good enough in speaking . . . it's just a test of being a good student" Another at DLIELC who was not entirely confident of his English ability said that he had a score of 91 on the ECLT, "but that doesn't prove anything." An officer at one site said that no matter what she

did at DLIELC, she couldn't get her ECLT score above 88 or 89, although she was getting ratings of at least 2+ on the OPI.

Five of the officers felt that the ECLT was too easy, and some of these suggested that a more advanced test be required. According to an officer who had attended DLIELC, only a few officers there found the scores of 90 to 95 to be difficult. He said that "the listening part is OK, [but] the reading part should be upgraded to a higher level." Another officer said that he had gotten three scores in a row of 100 at DLIELC, and that he had needed more of a challenge. A student interviewed at DLIELC suggested giving a more advanced test with higher levels of English proficiency. Finally, one officer commented that the audiotapes used in the test were not always clear, and another stated that the listening comprehension section made him nervous.

The OPI

Four officers, all interviewed at DLIELC, commented on the OPI. One of the officers who had taken it said that going through the OPI made her nervous, which she felt might have lowered her performance during the interview. Two officers also felt that doing well at the higher levels of the OPI depended to some degree on a knowledge of current events, not on one's actual English language proficiency. One student said that, "in [the] OPI they ask about local news, so we have to have T.V." Another reported that a friend had been asked about her opinion of a situation in Central America, and felt she was at a disadvantage because she did not know much about the issue.

How the Army Can Help to Improve the Chances for Success

Almost half of the officers (16) at Army posts commented on how the Army might help to improve the chances for success of non-native English speakers. While there was wide agreement that it was the individual's responsibility to "improve himself," officers made suggestions about how the Army could help, such as emphasizing particular areas in English language instruction, offering other kinds of programs for Puerto Ricans, and promoting good officers to higher positions to serve as mentors for other Puerto Rican Army personnel.

Reflecting stated desires to improve pronunciation and writing skills, nine officers suggested that the Army offer more instruction in these areas, at DLIELC or elsewhere. Five of these suggested that the Army provide more instruction in speaking, especially in pronunciation, and four said that the Army should offer more instruction in military writing.

Four officers stressed the importance of providing all English preparation before officers reached their first duty assignments; a few felt that officers should not even be allowed to go to Advanced Camp or to be commissioned unless they had a high level of English proficiency. On the other hand, two said that officers should have the opportunity to receive more advanced English instruction after they began their jobs, and one suggested that instructors be more aware that non-native English speakers might need extra help at BOBC.

Two officers in medical professions had not heard of DLIELC before the interview, and said that it was important to screen all non-native speaking officers, regardless of their source of commissioning. One of these would have welcomed the opportunity to take English at DLIELC if she had known about it.

Some suggested that the Army offer programs other than English language training for Puerto Ricans. Two wanted the Army to provide more cultural orientation to military life, and one felt that programs for Puerto Ricans that build confidence and motivation would be beneficial. Four said that native English-speaking Army personnel should be more understanding of Puerto Ricans and more aware of their cultural differences. One of these said that Americans "think [Puerto Rico] is in Africa," and felt that the Army should "educate" Americans about Puerto Rico.

Finally, one officer said that the Army ought to promote "good" Puerto Rican officers in order to provide role models and mentors for other Puerto Rican Army personnel. To his knowledge, there was only one "full bird" Puerto Rican colonel in the Army, and no Puerto Rican generals.

Future Plans of Officers

Almost half (16) of the officers at Army posts talked about their future plans. Two spoke only of their immediate expectations to go to Germany. Two others were either going on reserve status or leaving the Army (not by choice), and one was afraid he would have to leave the Army if his writing skills did not improve. One of these officers, who had wanted to make a career out of the Army, said that his separation from the Army had to do with the poor evaluations he received earlier in his career.

The other interviewees were almost evenly split between those who intended to make a 20-year career out of the Army, and those who wanted to remain in the Army for a while, but did not view it as a career. Five said that they intended to be career officers. One of these asserted that "they'd have to fire me" to make him leave, and another volunteered that he would stay in the Army as long as it took to become a general. Six officers said that they were staying in the Army for a while, but were keeping their options open for an alternative career. These officers fell into distinct categories: two wanted a career in the Army but were making "contingency plans" in case it didn't work out; and four did not view the Army as a permanent career and were already making plans for a post-military career. One of these officers said that he had planned to be a career officer, "but if the Army continues the way it's going . . . they might shrink the forces," and he might have to leave.

Summary of Findings from Officer Interviews

While most officers felt that their English was adequate for their current jobs, they also expressed a desire to improve both their oral and written skills, which they viewed as important for their jobs as well as for evaluations and promotions.

Most officers who wanted to improve their speaking skills said that they wanted to improve their pronunciation or accents. Having an accent was frequently viewed as a potential barrier to success in the Army. A few felt that they were made fun of or were not given opportunities to perform certain tasks because of their accent or general English ability. Those who wanted to improve their writing skills said that they needed more practice in writing military documents such as EERs, OERs, awards, and reports.

Some officers said that they had problems with English at their first duty assignments, but all generally agreed that their English ability improved over time. However, a few had gotten poor evaluations in communication skills earlier in their careers, which they saw as inhibiting their future chances for success in the Army.

Those who had attended DLIELC generally liked the instruction they received there, but wanted more opportunities to speak English both inside and outside of class, as well as more writing instruction. Some also felt that the instruction should be more advanced.

Of the approximately half who commented on the ECLT, most felt that it was an inadequate measure of English language proficiency, primarily because it did not measure speaking and writing skills. Some felt that the test was not advanced enough.

While many stressed the need to receive all needed English language training before reaching BOBC or permanent party, some suggested that the Army also offer subsequent continuing education opportunities in English. Officers most frequently cited pronunciation and writing skills as areas in which they could benefit from additional formal instruction.

Interviews with Supervisors and Ratings of Officers' Performance

Supervisors were asked about their experiences working with non-native English speaking officers. Supervisors were also asked to complete a Language Activity Rating form. Major findings from the interviews with supervisors are presented below, followed by an analysis of their ratings of officers' job performance.

Interviews with Supervisors

We interviewed roughly two-thirds as many supervisors as officers at Army posts (22). We did not interview some officers' supervisors because they could not be contacted or because they were unable to make the interview. One officer did not want us to interview his supervisor. Another supervisor declined the interview because he did not feel qualified to talk about an officer's performance.

Supervisors generally felt that the non-native English speaking Puerto Rican officers whom they managed or came in contact with were highly motivated, performed as well as or better than other officers, and had an adequate grasp of English (16). While there were problems with the performance and English of some officers, the eight supervisors who mentioned these said these problems were due to individual differences, and were no different than those found among native English speakers.

Importance of English

Supervisors generally agreed with officers that the ability to communicate effectively in English is crucial to the success of an officer, in addition to other qualities such as integrity, confidence, attitude, and the ability to exercise good judgment. About three-fourths of the supervisors (15) stressed the importance of good writing and speaking skills. According to one, "all facets are important for doing the job, as well as for getting promotions." At least seven supervisors felt that writing was important because officers are often evaluated on the quality of their writing. Three supervisors stressed the importance of oral skills, especially for giving impromptu briefings. One supervisor said that the officer he supervised did not do much writing in his job, but attended many meetings and was constantly speaking. According to the supervisor, "I can go weeks without writing anything," but officers have to speak every day.

Motivation, performance, and language proficiency of non-native English speaking officers

Most supervisors said that Puerto Rican officers were highly motivated as a group. Two supervisors at BOBC felt that the ones who went on active duty after training were above average in motivation and dedication, and were usually among the top third of officers in the Army. According to one supervisor who had worked with several non-native English speaking officers, "The vast majority of officers I have observed have been very good . . . in general, non-native speakers perform slightly above average."

Supervisors also generally agreed that most of the Puerto Rican officers they had encountered in the Army had adequate English and performed at least as well as other officers. According to one, his officer "is an excellent communicator in English . . . in

order to do his job effectively, he has to have a very solid command of English, and he has that." Another said that the non-native English speaking Puerto Rican Army personnel she'd worked with had "no problem in English . . . quite the contrary. They have to work harder to learn the language, they're very good . . . my experience has been a positive experience. Those folks have excelled at communication skills. I personally have not encountered any great multitude of officers that were substandard in English."

There was also wide agreement that while some non-native English speaking officers may have initial problems with English or with adjusting to being officers in the Army, they usually adapt or improve their English over time (16). Some noted that many *native* English speaking officers also need time to adapt when they begin their Army careers. One supervisor said that the officer she supervised had some problems at first, but "a lot of second lieutenants have problems" and that he "drastically improved his writing and oral skills, like night and day." Another commented that while all second lieutenants need to adjust to being an officer in the Army, this adjustment might be a little more difficult for non-native speakers. According to the supervisor, his officer "was uncomfortable with the new language and being a lieutenant . . . the only way to get comfortable is to talk a lot. He has improved one hundred per cent."

While most supervisors felt that the communication skills of non-native English speaking officers was generally adequate, some said that these officers could improve their English in particular areas. Six noted that non-native English speakers needed to improve their writing skills. Two lamented that many lieutenants could not write when they got to BOBC, regardless of whether their native language was English.

Five supervisors agreed with officers that having pronunciation problems or an accent might hinder an officer's career. One felt that pronunciation caused non-native speakers the most difficulties, and another said that if an officer had pronunciation problems, his troops would not understand him. Two said that Spanish speakers should not speak Spanish among themselves because this would hurt their accents.

Three supervisors noted that some non-native English speaking officers had problems with confidence, which might inhibit their ability to lead or to express themselves effectively. One at BOBC said that because an officer he supervised lacked confidence, he "plays a more subordinate role than he should." According to another, some non-native

speakers were afraid to speak English because "a lot of them are afraid that [other Army personnel] are going to laugh."

Three supervisors said that they had worked with officers whom they felt had inadequate training in English before reaching BOBC or their first duty assignments. One had encountered non-native English speaking officers at BOBC whom he felt were near the bottom of the class. Another knew of three officers who did not have the verbal or written communication skills to deal effectively with the technical aspects of their jobs. One said that he had supervised several during his career who had an inadequate grasp of English; these officers required more time from him, which detracted from his accomplishing other tasks. He felt that anyone beginning a career with language problems was placed at an initial handicap from which it was hard to recover, and said that it was unfair to commission officers whose English was not adequate.

Three supervisors cited problems that non-native English speaking Puerto Rican officers had with adapting to Army life and mainstream American culture. According to one, those who had non-English speaking spouses and who associated closely with other families of the same ethnic group had trouble assimilating into Army life and in learning English. He said he had seen this phenomenon with Puerto Ricans, Samoans, Filipinos, Orientals, and so on. "It's not unusual that families with similar ethnic backgrounds will become kind of clannish They are trying to retain part of their culture . . . their spouses sometimes have no English" The result is that "some soldiers only speak English on the job, and Spanish at home . . . rather than becoming more comfortable [with English], it's a part-time language They are not fully assimilated into the Army They don't identify themselves as Americans as [much as] they do with their ethnic background." He felt, however, that "the more time they've spent in the states, the faster they enter the mainstream."

How the Army can help improve the chances for success

Just as some officers had suggested, at least seven supervisors felt there should be better screening and training for non-native English speakers prior to entering the Army, and at least three suggested offering more formal opportunities for officers to improve their English on the job.

Two recommended offering better preparation in pronunciation skills, and four felt that officers should have a good command of writing skills before beginning their assignments. One supervisor suggested that ESL classes be taught by instructors who learned Spanish as a second language and who might better understand the particular problems of Hispanics in learning English. One who had worked with non-native speaking officers in Panama said that they should not be sent to Spanish speaking countries on their first assignments, because this hindered their progress in learning English.

Two supervisors agreed with a few of the officers that English speakers could be more understanding towards non-native English speakers. According to one of them, "There is an attitude among Americans that we speak English, and that our way is right Americans could be more open-minded, more understanding" The other said that Army personnel should "remember that our audience sometimes does not understand fully everything we say We need to speak more clearly . . . stay away from colloquialisms."

Supervisors' Ratings of the Performance of Officers

Twenty supervisors completed the Language Activity Rating in which they rated the performance of 21 officers on common tasks that involve using English. Most supervisors completed these ratings during the interviews; several returned the completed forms by mail after the interview.

Characteristics of raters and ratees

The officers rated worked in 12 different branches in three general areas (five in Combat Arms, seven in Combat Support, and nine in Combat Service Support). Almost all of the officers who were rated were at permanent party, while two were at BOBC and one was at BOAC. Ten supervisors had known their officers from one to sixth months, and ten others had know their officers from nine to 12 months. One supervisor did not report how long he had known the officer he supervised. Supervisors observed 16 of the officers almost daily, two officers were observed several times a week, and one supervisor said he observed the officer rarely, as the officer would only occasionally check in with him. Two supervisors did not report how frequently they observed their officers.

Analyzing the Language Activity Rating

The discussion of supervisors' ratings focuses only on those tasks that supervisors had observed at least eleven of the 21 officers perform. Only 45 of the 83 tasks met this criterion. Although the 38 tasks that did not meet this criterion listed as common tasks in the Military Qualifications Standards II Manual of Common Tasks, at least one-half of them appear to be performed more frequently by officers in Combat Arms. Over three-fourths of the officers in this sample worked primarily in Combat Support or Combat Service Support branches. Also, while officers are required to perform these tasks at BOBC, they appear to perform them less frequently at permanent party.

Of those officers who were observed performing the remaining tasks, about half were rated as performing as well as or better than most officers on over two-thirds of the tasks. Few were rated as performing "not as well as most officers" on the tasks (no more than five on any task). In only three of the tasks was any officer described as "performs inadequately." Thus, according to their supervisors, these non-native English speaking officers generally perform at least as well as other officers on most of the tasks involving English communication skills. The performance of officers on specific tasks is discussed in the next section. In order to facilitate the discussion, some items have been taken out of sequence.

Speaking and listening tasks. As shown in Table 4.7, some of the speaking and listening tasks were more commonly performed than others. Two-thirds or more of the officers had been observed completing 13 of the tasks; the remaining eleven tasks were less frequently performed.

The officers appeared to perform well on these speaking and listening tasks. The majority of the officers were rated as performing "as well as most" or "better than most" on all of the tasks (about 72 percent or more).

Officers generally did best at sending messages by radio (item 16), conducting a convoy briefing (item 20), finding a "mission oriented protective procedure (MOPP) guidance" (item 23), conducting training procedures (item 36), and carrying out inspections

TABLE 4.7. Speaking and Listening Tasks (N=21)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most officers		As well as most officers		Not as well as most officers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>General Common Tasks</u>										
1. Conducts briefings	18	85.9	4	22.2	10	56.6	4	22.2	--	--
2. Counsels subordinates	18	85.7	6	33.3	8	44.4	3	16.7	1	5.6
3. Manages subordinates	20	95.2	8	40.0	8	40.0	3	15.0	1	5.0
<u>When reporting information of potential intelligence value</u>										
16. If sending message by radio, uses proper radio/telephone procedures	12	57.1	6	50.0	4	33.3	2	16.7	--	--
17. Sends message by wire	11	52.4	4	36.4	5	45.5	2	18.2	--	--
19. Coordinates with higher headquarters	16	76.2	6	37.5	7	43.8	3	18.8	--	--
<u>When preparing/executing movement plans</u>										
20. Conducts a convoy briefing	12	57.1	7	58.3	3	25.0	2	16.7	--	--
<u>When supervising unit response to a chemical or biological attack</u>										
22. Supervises the protection of personnel	12	57.1	3	25.0	9	75.0	--	--	--	--
23. Finds MOPP guidance	13	62.0	6	46.2	7	53.8	--	--	--	--
24. Directs personnel to assume required MOPP level, checks key personnel for proper wearing of the CB protective ensemble and has personnel check each other using the buddy system, etc.	11	52.4	3	27.3	8	72.7	--	--	--	--
28. Supervises improvements of current field positions	11	52.4	4	36.4	7	63.6	--	--	--	--
<u>When conducting collective training</u>										
30. Gathers training resources to conduct collective training	18	85.6	7	38.9	11	61.1	--	--	--	--

*Percentages based on number of officers rated for task.

TABLE 4.7. (Cont.) Speaking and Listening Tasks (N=21)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most officers		As well as most officers		Not as well as most officers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
31. Identifies and conducts individual and leader training . . . conducts collective training, etc.	17	81.0	7	41.2	10	58.8	--	--	--	--
32. Conducts an after action review (AAR)	15	71.4	6	40.0	6	40.0	3	20.0	--	--
<u>When conducting a platoon level after action review (AAR)</u>										
34. Reviews training objectives with squad leaders and their squads and discusses the training events	13	62.0	3	23.8	8	61.6	2	15.4	--	--
35. Reviews the training event with the entire platoon (i.e., guides the discussion, etc.)	14	66.7	5	35.7	6	42.8	3	21.4	--	--
<u>When conducting individual training</u>										
36. Conducts training procedures using the IAW Five-P model	11	52.4	5	45.5	5	45.5	1	9.0	--	--
<u>When supervising unit maintenance operations</u>										
37. Determines the effectiveness of key maintenance personnel to perform their functions, and responsibilities	14	66.7	5	35.7	7	50.0	2	14.3	--	--
38. Inspects repair actions, safety procedures, and facilities	15	71.4	6	40.0	7	46.7	2	13.3	--	--
39. Inspects unit recovery operations	11	52.4	3	27.3	8	72.7	--	--	--	--
<u>When authorizing searches, inspections, and inventories</u>										
47. Carries out the inspection or orders subordinates to carry out the inspection	11	52.4	5	45.5	6	54.5	--	--	--	--

*Percentages based on number of officers rated for task.

TABLE 4.7. (Cont.) Speaking and Listening Tasks (N=21)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most officers		As well as most officers		Not as well as most officers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
48. Conducts counseling session with the soldier	18	85.6	6	33.3	7	38.9	5	27.8	--	--
<u>When preparing an Officer Evaluation Report (OER) Support Form</u>										
49. Discusses duties and responsibilities with the rater	17	81.0	5	29.4	8	47.1	4	23.5	--	--
<u>When writing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)</u>										
50. Asks job incumbents what procedures they are currently using to perform tasks	19	90.5	6	31.6	8	42.1	5	26.3	--	--

*Percentages based on number of officers rated for task.

(item 47). From 45 to 58 percent of the officers observed were rated as performing "better than most officers" on these tasks.

The officers in this study generally performed less well on two of the general speaking tasks (conducting briefings, item 1, and counseling subordinates, item 2); and on the tasks involving the oral communication that takes place prior to writing a counseling statement, a support form for an OER, and a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) (items 48, 49, and 50). Between four and five officers were rated as performing "not as well as most" or worse (one was rated as "performs inadequately") on these tasks.

Reading and writing tasks. These appeared to be relatively common responsibilities. Supervisors had observed more officers performing these tasks than the speaking and listening tasks. At least two-thirds of the officers had been observed performing 10 of the 13 tasks, as shown in Table 4.8.

As with the speaking and listening areas, at least two-thirds or more performed adequately or better on these tasks. In fact, officers appeared to perform somewhat better on the reading and writing tasks than on speaking and listening. At least 47 percent of the officers received ratings of "better than most" on eight of the 13 reading and writing tasks (62 percent of the tasks). On speaking and listening tasks, about 45 percent or more of the officers were rated this way on only five of the 24 tasks.

Among these reading and writing tasks, officers were best at writing and reviewing EERs (items 69 and 70) and initiating recommendations for awards (item 73). About one-half of the officers observed received ratings of "better than most" on these items (47 to 50 percent).

Just as officers were not rated as highly on the oral communication aspects of writing counseling statements, support forms for OERs, and SOPs as on the other speaking and listening tasks, officers generally did not perform as well on the actual writing of these documents as on the other reading and writing tasks (items 71, 72, and 74), nor did they perform as well on writing a narrative for a report (item 75). Four or five officers received ratings of "not as well as most" on these items (from 23 to 30 percent).

TABLE 4.8. Reading and Writing Tasks (N=21)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most officers		As well as most officers		Not as well as most officers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>When reporting information of potential intelligence value</u>										
54. Drafts message summarizing information in SALUT format or other appropriate format	12	57.1	4	33.3	8	66.7	--	--	--	--
<u>When establishing priorities and getting resources for training tasks</u>										
64. Selects at least two collective tasks from the ARTEP or other critical missions or tasks, lists at least 10 individual and 5 leader tasks that support the collective tasks, and establishes a priority for the tasks	11	52.4	4	36.4	6	54.5	1	9.1	--	--
65. Lists resources needed to train personnel on tasks that have priority	14	66.7	6	42.8	7	50.0	1	7.1	--	--
<u>When conducting a platoon level after action review (AAR)</u>										
66. Develops a discussion outline from the appropriate ARTEP publication and any notes made during the evaluation	12	57.1	4	33.3	6	50.0	2	16.7	--	--
<u>When conducting individual training</u>										
67. Lists and establishes priorities for critical tasks to be trained	14	66.7	5	35.7	8	57.1	1	7.1	--	--
<u>When writing an Enlisted Evaluation Report (EER)</u>										
69. Verifies that the information in part I is correct, etc.	17	81.0	8	47.1	7	41.2	2	11.8	--	--
70. Checks the current rating scheme for the rated soldier . . . examines the evaluations of the rater and indorser . . . and reviews the entire EER, etc.	15	71.4	7	46.7	7	46.7	1	6.7	--	--

*Percentages based on number of officers rated for task.

TABLE 4.8. (Cont.) Reading and Writing Tasks (N=21)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most officers		As well as most officers		Not as well as most officers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>When writing a counseling statement</u>										
71. Drafts a counseling statement	17	81.0	6	35.3	6	35.3	5	29.4	--	--
<u>When preparing an Officer Evaluation Report (OER) Support Form</u>										
72. Verifies that the information in parts I and II is correct, drafts Part IVa and IVb, and creates a final Support Form, etc.	17	81.0	5	29.4	8	47.1	4	23.5	--	--
<u>When initiating a Recommendation for an Award</u>										
73. Completes recommendation and signs	14	66.7	7	50.0	5	35.7	2	14.3	--	--
<u>When writing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)</u>										
74. Reads the regulations that have a bearing on the problem, drafts SOP, etc.	17	81.0	6	35.3	6	35.3	5	29.4	--	--
<u>When writing a Narrative for a Report</u>										
75. Examines information in the Report of Survey he or she has received, . . . drafts, dates and signs report, etc.	17	81.0	6	35.3	7	41.2	4	23.5	--	--

*Percentages based on number of officers rated for task.

Reading tasks. Officers were rated as performing the reading-only tasks less frequently than the other tasks involving communication skills, as shown in Table 4.9. Supervisors were able to rate fewer than 14 officers on about half of these tasks. However, officers frequently performed the two general reading tasks (at least 81 percent were rated as having engaged in these tasks).

Overall, the officers in this study appeared to perform better on the reading-only tasks than on the speaking and listening and reading and writing tasks. At least 85 percent of the officers observed performed adequately or better on these tasks, and between 43 and 57 percent of the officers performed "better than most" on each. Very few officers were rated as performing "not as well as most" on these tasks (no more than two on any reading task).

Summary of findings from ratings

Supervisors' ratings indicate that officers generally performed adequately on the common tasks involving English communication skills. They performed somewhat better at reading and writing tasks than at speaking and listening tasks, and better at reading-only tasks than at any of the other tasks involving English communication skills. These results concur with findings from interviews with non-native English speaking Puerto Rican Army personnel and their supervisors. While many officers and their supervisors felt that officers needed to improve their writing skills, reading skills were not mentioned as a problem for officers.

Summary of Findings

Overall, as indicated by officer and supervisor interviews and ratings, most non-native English speaking officers in this study had sufficient English to perform adequately in their jobs. Rating and interview data also show that the officers generally perform better at reading and writing tasks than at speaking and listening tasks.

Officers and supervisors felt that while some officers have initial problems with English when they reach BOBC or their duty assignments, most improve their English over time.

TABLE 4.9. Reading Tasks (N=21)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most officers		As well as most officers		Not as well as most officers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>General Reading Tasks</u>										
4. Reads and understands technical manuals (TMs) and field manuals (FMs)	21	100.0	9	42.9	11	52.4	1	4.8	--	--
5. Conducts basic maintenance in accordance with written instructions	17	81.0	8	47.1	8	47.1	--	--	1	5.9
<u>When establishing priorities and getting resources for training tasks</u>										
63. Reviews ARTEP and other critical missions or tasks	15	71.4	7	46.7	7	46.7	1	6.7	--	--
<u>When using a map overlay</u>										
76. Locates grid intersections on the map that correspond to the grid register marks on the overlay and identifies (by coordinates or terrain features) map locations that correspond to graphic information	13	62.0	7	53.8	5	38.5	1	7.7	--	--
<u>When reporting information of potential intelligence value</u>										
77. Identifies information concerning enemy activity and significant terrain and weather features	11	52.4	5	45.5	6	54.5	--	--	--	--
<u>When navigating using a map and compass</u>										
78. Determines the grid coordinates of a point on a military map using the military grid reference system (grid coordinate scale and protractor), measures distance on a map, navigates from start point to finish point using a compass, and measures distance using pace count	13	62.0	7	53.8	6	46.2	--	--	--	--
<u>When supervising unit maintenance operations</u>										
79. Ensures that all maintenance publications are on hand and used properly	14	67.0	8	57.1	4	28.6	2	14.3	--	--

*Percentages based on number of officers rated for tasks.

TABLE 4.9. (Cont.) Reading Tasks (N=21)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most officers		As well as most officers		Not as well as most officers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
80. Ensures that required tools are either on hand or on a valid requisition order	14	67.0	7	50.0	5	35.7	2	14.3	--	--
83. Inspects Preventive Maintenance Check Procedure (PMCS)	13	62.0	6	46.2	5	38.5	2	15.4	--	--

*Percentages based on number of officers rated for tasks.

Officers and supervisors viewed both oral and written communication skills as important in officers' jobs and in their careers, especially for evaluations and promotions. Both groups suggested that having pronunciation problems or an accent can inhibit an officer's success in the Army, and some officers who spoke fluent English expressed a desire to get rid of their accents. Both groups felt that officers could benefit from more formal instruction in pronunciation skills and military writing. A few supervisors and officers also said that some officers exhibit a lack of confidence that can weaken their effectiveness, while others had known officers who appeared to have difficulties with adjusting to Army life.

Both groups suggested that the Army do a better job of screening officers' English before they reach BOBC or their first assignments, as well as provide opportunities for them to receive more English instruction if necessary.

Chapter 5. Interview Findings: English Language Preparation for Enlisted Personnel

This chapter discusses the communication needs and the adequacy of English language preparation and screening of non-native English speaking enlisted personnel. The discussion is based on data from interviews with enlisted soldiers and their supervisors and from supervisors' ratings of their performance. Also included in this chapter are the views of some officers and their supervisors on this topic.

From January through April 1988, we talked with 27 Puerto Rican enlisted personnel: 22 at five Army posts, and to five attending DLIELC. At the Army posts, we interviewed 17 supervisors, most of whom completed Language Activity Ratings about the soldiers' performance on common tasks that require English communication skills. Five Puerto Rican officers and ten of their supervisors also volunteered comments about their experiences with non-native English speaking soldiers in the Army.

Identifying the Sample of Enlisted Soldiers and Arranging Interviews

Our sample of enlisted personnel was drawn from a pool that included all U.S. Army enlisted soldiers who attended DLIELC from January 1985 to the present. Staff at DLIELC gave us the names of 1555 soldiers meeting this definition. These names were then matched with location and descriptive information from the EMF provided by PERSINSCOM. About 42 per cent of those who had gone to DLIELC were not listed on the EMF. These soldiers are most probably no longer on active duty in the Army. About 628 soldiers were listed at Army posts in the United States, while about 269 were overseas or at locations other than Army posts.

We selected six of the sites for interviews on the basis of convenience. Each site had already been chosen for officer interviews or for other evaluation activities. Our priority at each site was to interview non-native English speaking officers. This, coupled with limited time and resources, permitted us to talk with only a small number of enlisted members at each site. Interviews with supervisors were conducted after asking the soldiers for permission to speak with these persons. Table 5.1 shows the distribution of soldiers and supervisors interviewed at each site, and the numbers of supervisors who completed the Language Activity Rating form.

TABLE 5.1. Interviews and Language Activity Ratings, by Site (N=44)

Site	Number of:		Supervisors Completing Rating Form
	Enlisted Soldiers	Supervisors	
Fort Benning	5	2	0
Fort Bliss	3	2	1
Fort Bragg	9	9	7
Fort Gordon	4	3	3
Fort Leonard Wood	1	1	0
DLIELC	5	--	--
Total	27	17	11

Characteristics of the Enlisted Soldiers

All of the enlisted personnel interviewed at Army posts were at permanent party. Three of the interviewees were women. As shown in Table 5.2, of those at Army posts, nine had been in the Army from eight months to one and one-half years, and ten had been in for 20 to 29 months. One had six years of service, and two did not comment on how long they had been in the Army.

TABLE 5.2. Enlisted Soldiers' Time in Army (N=22)

<u>Time in Army</u>	<u>Enlisted Personnel Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than one year	3	13.5
1.0 to 1.9 years	8	36.0
2.0 to 2.9 years	8	36.0
3.0 to 5.9 years	0	0.0
Six years	1	4.5
Missing Data	2	9.0
Total	22	100.0

Almost two-thirds of the enlisted personnel said that they had at least some college education in Puerto Rico (17). Ten did not report any education beyond high school. The levels of education attained by interviewees are shown in Table 5.3.

TABLE 5.3. Levels of Education of Enlisted Soldiers (N=27)

<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>Number of Soldiers</u>
High school	10
College/Postsecondary:	
Less than 1 year	3
1 to 2 years	9
3 years	1
4 years	<u>4</u>
Total	27

Three of those who had attended college for four years had bachelor's degrees. Two of the interviewees who had two years of postsecondary education said that they held associate degrees.

Those at Army posts were asked whether they had lived in the U.S. before joining the Army. While one soldier had been born and raised in the continental United States, and another had moved to New York at age 24, the others had never lived in the U.S. as adults before joining the Army. Six of these said that they were born in the continental United States but moved to Puerto Rico at two or three years of age.

The soldiers interviewed at Army posts had attended DLIELC anywhere from four to 18 weeks. Five soldiers had attended DLIELC from four to seven weeks, nine soldiers from eight to ten weeks, and four soldiers from 14 to 18 weeks. Four did not comment on how long they had been at DLIELC. Of the five soldiers interviewed at DLIELC, three had attended DLIELC from three to four weeks, and two had been there from 20 to 22 weeks.

Interviewers informally noted the level of English proficiency of almost two-thirds of the soldiers at Army posts (14). Nine of the soldiers communicated well in English and had vocabularies adequate to express themselves, but made some errors in grammar, pronunciation, or intonation. They also had accents. Four of these spoke with some hesitation. Three had trouble communicating with interviewers because they had difficulties with pronunciation, vocabulary or grammar.

Conducting the Interviews

Protocols of general questions were used to guide the interviews with enlisted personnel and their supervisors. The soldiers were asked about their experiences learning and using English prior to joining and during their Army careers, whether they felt their English was sufficient to perform in their current jobs, and in what areas they felt they needed to improve. The supervisors were asked similar questions about their experiences working with non-native English speaking Puerto Rican enlisted personnel. Copies of the interview protocols appear in Appendix B.

Each interview lasted from 30 minutes to one hour. In general, although interviewers were guided by the same set of questions, not all questions were asked of all interviewees, because of a lack of time, or because a question was not appropriate for a particular person. For example, those interviewed at DLIELC were not asked whether they felt their English was adequate to perform their jobs.

Enlisted Soldiers' Comments

Experiences Learning English

Non-Army experiences. Many enlisted personnel had studied English in Puerto Rico from elementary through high school (11). They noted, as officers had, that grammar, reading, and writing were taught in these classes, but that there was little instruction or practice in speaking English.

A few commented on their most valuable pre-Army experiences for learning English. One soldier got the most help from a civilian employer who encouraged him to learn

English and who enrolled him in English classes in the U.S. before he joined the Army. Another said that reading helped him to learn English, and one felt that exposure to television and radio and speaking with people were the most helpful. Two stressed that it was their own motivation that helped them the most to learn English.

Experiences at DLIELC. Almost half of the soldiers interviewed at Army posts and at DLIELC said that it had helped them to learn English (13), and they viewed DLIELC as a place to adjust to the Army and to get accustomed to using English. Seven said that they had good teachers, and six felt that they had learned a lot of grammar or vocabulary there. Three noted that DLIELC had helped them with reading skills, and two mentioned that they appreciated the conversational classes, exercises in the textbooks, the language lab, and homework assignments. Another two said that they received help in writing or pronunciation.

About half (14) of the interviewees felt that they had few opportunities to speak English outside of class, and six of these also said that they did not have many chances to speak English in class either. Many felt that they would have learned English more quickly if Spanish speakers were not kept together in a group, and if there had been more contact with native English speakers on the Air Force Base.

While eight noted that learning military skills at DLIELC helped prepare them for BCT, three said that they would have preferred to spend more time learning English, and to receive military instruction after attending DLIELC.

A few soldiers mentioned areas in which they would have preferred more instruction at DLIELC. Four felt that the classes should be more challenging; three wanted to focus less on doing exercises in grammar and vocabulary, and at least six suggested that DLIELC provide more opportunities for soldiers to practice speaking English. One said he would have liked to receive more instruction in pronunciation.

Training and at permanent party. More than half of the soldiers said that critical times for learning English were at BCT, Advanced Individual Training (AIT), or at permanent party (15). These were the environments in which some soldiers said that they really started to use the language. A few mentioned getting coaching from a friend or a drill sergeant at BCT, and one said that he had to learn English during training in order

to "get in the group." According to another who learned most of his English during BCT, "real English you learn when you talk to another person, and when you have the necessity to learn English . . . you survive." One interviewee said that while DLIELC was helpful, a soldier would not really learn English until he went into the "real world."

While many enlisted personnel reported making large gains in English at BCT and at AIT, these were also environments in which some soldiers had real difficulties with English. For example, eight soldiers said that they managed to get through BCT, but did not feel sufficiently prepared in English for this experience. According to one, "The classes [at DLIELC] did not help you a lot. When I got to BT, I didn't know anything. I had a hard time." Another said, "When I finished DLIELC I didn't know enough vocabulary. [At BCT] I understood only sometimes. [If] I saw everybody running I ran too." According to another soldier, "When I went to Basic Training I didn't understand anything. But when I left I did." Three cited having problems with English at AIT. One said that he was afraid during this training, but that he gained "the self-confidence to speak and communicate" at his current duty assignment. Yet another said that he was "going crazy" at BCT, and that his first month at AIT was "terrible."

Continuing education. Three soldiers mentioned having attended additional ESL courses in BSEP at their posts. Two of these reported gains in their ECLT scores, ranging from 13 to 23 points, since leaving DLIELC.

English Skills Needed in Jobs

Seventeen of the enlisted personnel interviewed at Army posts commented on the *English skills they needed in their jobs*. Ten soldiers said that they primarily needed to speak and understand, and that they did not do much writing. Two of these operated radios in their jobs. Four felt that writing was also important; one of these worked with computers. Three said that they needed to read technical manuals and other documents.

Soldiers cited other qualities and skills that were important in their jobs and for their success in the Army. Some of the most frequently cited qualities and skills were leadership, a good attitude, motivation, commitment, good values; and knowing how to follow orders, "stay out of trouble," work with a team, and expend the effort to accomplish a job.

Soldiers' English Language Proficiency

While enlisted personnel generally felt that their English was adequate and had gotten better over time in the Army (20), most felt that they needed to improve their English. One had little confidence in his English ability and felt inferior because others with better English were being promoted to higher levels, while he was not. Another did not comment on the adequacy of his English.

Two soldiers who noted that their English had improved said that their pronunciation was initially poor and that people could not understand them when they joined the Army. One soldier reported that his supervisor had remarked that the soldier couldn't speak English at all when he arrived.

As with the officers, almost all of the enlisted soldiers who commented on their English language proficiency (17) wanted to improve their English in some areas. Unlike officers, only one enlisted member mentioned wanting to improve his writing skills, while many expressed interest, as officers had, in improving their oral communication skills.

Six soldiers said they wanted to improve their speaking skills. One of these felt that his level of English proficiency depended on the day of the week and the person he was talking to. Another said that although his English had improved a great deal, he was still uncomfortable talking with supervisors. Four expressed a desire to get rid of their accents or to improve their pronunciation, and two of these said that people still had trouble understanding them. One handled this problem by not talking much to avoid being misunderstood.

Two said that they wanted to improve their English skills in all areas; one of these said that it was absolutely necessary that he improve his English in order to progress. According to the soldier, his supervisor would say to him, "You're really smart, you're on top of everyone for promotion except for English, so you need classes." Two others wanted to learn more vocabulary and grammar.

Over one-fourth (7) of the soldiers said that they had difficulties understanding American slang or the speech of English speakers with non-standard or regional accents.

Another soldier found it easier to understand the English of some blacks than whites, because he had been primarily exposed to "black English" at BCT and AIT, and at Airborne training.

About one-third of the soldiers said that a fear of being ridiculed inhibited them from speaking English (8), and one said that sometimes people ignored him if they didn't understand him. Soldiers reported that this occurred at BCT and at permanent party. One added that this fear of being laughed at also existed among soldiers at DLIELC: "The problem at DLIELC is on the people -- they want everything too easy They are shy and they don't want to do it because they think people will laugh at you Puerto Ricans, even if they know English, they won't speak English because they are afraid that someone will laugh at them." She spoke of overcoming her own fears: "I was scared when I first got here because people laughed at me, but I got over it."

Five soldiers suggested that the Army offer more English language training on post for non-native English speakers, and two of these felt that this training should be more advanced than what is currently available. One said that if such courses existed, he would take them during off-duty hours.

Two soldiers felt that the Army should provide opportunities for citizens from both Puerto Rico and the continental United States to learn about each other. One of these felt that NCOs should be briefed about "who we [Puerto Ricans] are."

Comments about English Language Tests

While only one soldier commented on the OPI, saying that the interview made him nervous, about half of the soldiers commented on the ECLT (13). One soldier said that "70 is a good cut-off score" because "it challenges you to learn English." Offering comments similar to those of officers, the others indicated that the ECLT did not adequately measure their ability to speak and use English. Seven soldiers said that the test could be passed by a person who might not be able to speak or understand spoken English. According to one, "I know everything about grammar. I can pass perfectly. Listening I can pass. It doesn't mean I know English." Another soldier, who was sent to BCT after receiving a 70 on the ECLT at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) in Puerto Rico, said he had problems with English during training and was sent from there

to DLIELC. Two also felt that soldiers who spoke English adequately or who had the potential to do so, still might not achieve the 70 they needed to graduate from DLIELC.

Three noted having had difficulties with the listening portion of the ECLT. One felt that she might have passed the test at MEPS if the equipment had been better. According to her, there were no headphones; the tape recorder played out to the entire room. Another said that the listening portion made him nervous, and sometimes the tape wasn't clear. Yet another felt that this part was difficult because if he did not understand one word of a question on the tape, he might miss the entire question. "Every exercise has one word . . . if you catch this word you can get it."

Future Plans of Enlisted Personnel

Only four soldiers at Army posts commented on their future plans. While one said he wanted to leave the Army and had only joined to pay off debts, the other three liked the Army and planned to stay. Two of these planned to pursue higher education. One wanted to enroll in ROTC while working on a bachelor's degree; the other wanted to pursue a PhD.

Summary of Findings from Interviews with Enlisted Personnel

While enlisted soldiers generally felt that DLIELC had helped them to learn English and some military skills, and to become adjusted to the Army, many said that they really began to speak and use English at BCT, AIT, or at permanent party. Many would have liked to have more opportunities to practice speaking English at DLIELC.

Some enlisted members initially had difficulties with English during training or at their first duty assignments, but many asserted that their English had improved over time. As with officers, most soldiers felt that their English was currently adequate, but still wanted to improve their oral communication skills. They especially wanted to improve their pronunciation or their accents. Others had difficulties understanding American slang or regional accents, and felt they would benefit from instruction in these areas.

According to some soldiers, native speakers made fun of their English, and this inhibited them from speaking the language. A few reported feeling shy at first and gaining confidence in speaking English over time.

Enlisted soldiers who commented on the ECLT generally felt, as officers did, that the test did not adequately assess their English language proficiency. The predominant sentiment was that enlisted soldiers could pass the test but might not necessarily be able to speak or understand English, or vice versa.

To help meet their English language needs, enlisted members recommended that DLIELC provide more opportunities for speaking English and that Spanish speakers not be segregated from native English speakers. Soldiers also wanted to have opportunities to take English courses on post, and suggested that these English courses should be more advanced than those at DLIELC.

Supervisors' and Officers' Evaluations

Supervisors were asked about their experiences working with non-native English speaking enlisted personnel. They were also asked to complete a Language Activity Rating form about the performance of enlisted personnel on common tasks that require using English. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, five officers and 10 of their supervisors also presented their views on the performance and English proficiency of non-native English speaking enlisted soldiers. Major findings from the interviews with these people are presented below, followed by an analysis of supervisors' ratings of the soldiers' job performance.

We spoke with 17 of the soldiers' supervisors and were unable to interview the other five. One of the 17 interviewees spoke only briefly with us. Four of the five with whom we did not talk could not be reached or were not able to make the interview. One soldier did not want his supervisor to be interviewed.

Soldiers' supervisors reported that they had known six of the enlisted personnel ranging from two and one-half to six months, and nine of the soldiers ranging from eight

months to two years. Three supervisors did not say how long they had known the soldiers.

Comments of Officers and Supervisors

As had been said about officers, supervisors felt that non-native English speaking Puerto Rican Army personnel were generally highly motivated, performed as well as or better than other enlisted personnel, and had an adequate grasp of English to perform their jobs. About one-third of the interviewees felt that enlisted soldiers were not adequately prepared in English before reaching their posts. Others cited some problems that enlisted personnel had with English, but noted that their English improved over time.

English skills needed

Nine supervisors commented on the English skills that were important in enlisted soldiers' jobs. Five of them agreed with enlisted personnel that speaking and understanding were important English skills. One supervisor noted that in the Army, misunderstanding an oral command could be dangerous. He explained, for example, that there were different firing orders: one to fire immediately, another to fire five minutes from now, and so on. Any misinterpretation of these orders could lead to dangerous mistakes. Three cited writing as important, while only one mentioned reading. One supervisor felt that writing skills become more important as enlisted personnel move up to higher ranks.

As soldiers had said, supervisors felt that leadership, a positive attitude, and motivation were important qualities of soldiers. They also mentioned common sense, ambition, discipline, confidence, job knowledge, and the ability to maintain good relationships with people.

Motivation, performance, and language proficiency

Supervisors were asked to comment about non-native English speaking enlisted personnel as a group, then to comment on the specific soldiers they supervised.

Non-native speaking enlisted soldiers as a group. Ten supervisors and two officers commented that Puerto Rican enlisted personnel were generally more motivated than average. One supervisor who had managed four non-native English speaking soldiers reported that he would rate Puerto Rican soldiers better than most. In general, he said, "I've seen more drive in them. They're very motivated. I see a lot more motivation in them than in other people. Of the particular soldier he supervised, he said, "If he's motivated, he can go places, which he is He's superior. He's a go-getter." Another commented, "I know Puerto Ricans doing great jobs . . . better than I can do They're good people, too." A third supervisor said, "I don't see where they're being Spanish speaking has really held them back." Of the soldier he worked with, he said, "I have no doubts that he'll be outstanding Overall, he's a good soldier." One of the officers asserted that "Of those I've seen, they're on par, probably even better . . . they're very 'prideful,' and they excel if they've got responsibilities They're just hard-working kids, well-educated, too."

While interviewees generally felt that most non-native English speaking soldiers demonstrated a desire to perform well in the Army, about one-third of the interviewees (six supervisors and four officers) said that many enlisted personnel were not adequately prepared in English when they reached their posts.

One officer noted that as an enlisted man himself he had just gotten by with the English he knew. He said that he saw Puerto Rican soldiers who didn't know what they were doing during BCT. "They're just imitating others. In reception in Fort Jackson the test [ECLT] was easy I wanted to avoid DLIELC because it would hold me up for a few weeks. But I see enlisted men crying - they can't take it. They're pushing the ground a few hundred times a day being punished by their sergeants for being bad soldiers when they're not, they're good soldiers, they just can't understand English." Other officers made similar comments about non-native English speaking soldiers. One said, "I don't know how [some soldiers] get here from DLIELC, because they can't speak English. [The] main problem is that they can't understand their sergeants. And American sergeants don't understand Puerto Ricans" Yet another claimed that "a lot of people have been pulled from the Army just because we're Spanish speakers. I know a lot who have been pulled out because of language, but they're good soldiers."

One supervisor who had worked with many non-native English speaking Army personnel said that they took an inordinate amount of time. Another supervisor felt that soldiers "normally have a fair use of the language, but in some cases they can't speak it." For these cases, he said, he would have NCOs work with the soldiers or send them to BSEP. While this supervisor felt that English problems were limited primarily to lower ranking soldiers, another supervisor said that most E6s and E7s had a hard time with English, but they generally could not afford the time out from their jobs to receive English language instruction.

Two interviewees said that non-native English speaking soldiers tended to be shy or lacked confidence in their English ability, which might be misunderstood as a lack of English proficiency. One officer mentioned an apparently common fear among enlisted personnel, which soldiers themselves had expressed: "A lot of them are afraid that they [other Army personnel] are going to laugh." A third interviewee said he had observed an example of this -- a sergeant major making fun of an E4's English in front of a group of native English-speaking NCOs.

Three supervisors felt that some enlisted personnel made a deliberate effort not to understand English in order to get out of doing work. One said that it was initially difficult to tell who truly did not understand and who was pretending not to, and it took him about three months to learn to tell the difference between the two. Another commented, "they're the ones who don't care to understand you They don't apply themselves. It's not that they don't know the language, it's that they don't care to speak it correctly or write it correctly I've observed this myself . . . a way to cop out of it."

Two officers and a supervisor agreed that while some soldiers had problems with English, these were not insurmountable and did not prevent them from performing their jobs. One officer said that he had seen soldiers who had English difficulties, but "I have also seen them pick it up in the Army quickly. It's will power - if you want to learn, you learn." According to a supervisor who had worked with six non-native English speaking soldiers in the last year, "I've been fortunate, I haven't had much problem with them."

Enlisted soldiers they supervised. Most of the supervisors (15) commented that the people they supervised were "good soldiers" and highly motivated. Sixteen enlisted members were reported as having at least adequate English to perform their jobs. However, some supervisors felt that soldiers still had trouble with: vocabulary or grammar (2), listening or understanding (2), pronunciation (1), talking too fast (1), using Puerto Rican slang (1), and using too formal, or "book English" (1). One said that the individual she supervised lacked confidence, and that it took more of her time to explain jobs to this soldier. Another noted that an enlisted member made an occasional mistake in a verb form when writing. Otherwise, supervisors did not cite reading and writing as areas in which soldiers had difficulties.

A few supervisors identified problems that were not necessarily difficulties with English. Three supervisors felt that their enlisted soldiers were too shy or quiet, and one said that his soldier had initially lacked assertiveness. One who had known his soldier for only two months felt that the individual he supervised might be pretending not to understand some commands in order to avoid doing certain tasks.

Seven supervisors noted that the English of their supervisees had improved over time. Four of these said that the enlisted soldiers "could not speak English" or "didn't understand anything" when they arrived, but had since greatly improved.

Attitudes of native speakers

Fourteen supervisors commented on attitudes of native speakers towards non-native English speaking Army personnel or expressed their own attitudes toward them. Eight felt that these Army personnel were treated no differently than native English speaking Army personnel. One volunteered that non-native English speaking enlisted soldiers were "widely accepted."

Four expressed a dislike of non-native English speakers using Spanish with each other. One felt that Spanish speakers did this to talk about people behind their backs, and another asserted that this was a drawback to gaining fluency in English. "If they don't speak English constantly, it won't be as good as it could be. If they spoke less Spanish among themselves, their English would improve."

How the Army can help improve the chances for success

Most supervisors said that non-native English speakers should take advantage of opportunities already available to them, and three said that they should not receive any special treatment. Still, many made recommendations to improve the chances for the success of non-native English speaking enlisted soldiers in the Army.

Five supervisors and three officers felt that the standards for the English language proficiency of non-native English speaking soldiers were not high enough, and that enlistees were not adequately trained in English before reaching permanent party. These eight stressed the importance of providing sufficient preparation in English before soldiers reach their posts. One supervisor, who said he had encountered a number of Puerto Rican soldiers who "can't speak English," felt that recruiting in Puerto Rico did not seem to require evidence of English proficiency. From his experience, he had the impression that the Army gave soldiers training to develop just enough English to become falsely confident, and that these soldiers did not realize how important and how difficult learning fluent English could be. Another said that if an enlisted soldier's English was not adequate for the job, it "detracts from the unit." From his point of view, sufficient English language training prior to arriving on post was essential, because he could not afford to take soldiers away from their units in order to send them to ESL classes or to BSEP. He admitted that this was a hard line to take, but "they have a job to do." He believed that recruiters sometimes misled enlistees by telling them that the Army would take care of them. According to one of the officers, "There should be more training before it's too late, before they come to BT or AIT. Job experience is a good base for improvement, but they need English *before*. [We] shouldn't wait until they fail." Another officer said that adequate preparation in English was important because Army personnel assumed that soldiers knew English by the time they got to their first duty assignments.

Two of the officers felt that DLIELC did not adequately prepare enlisted personnel for life in the Army. According to one, "They should raise the standards at DLIELC . . ." Another felt, based on his experience and on his conversations with soldiers who had gone to DLIELC, that they weren't being challenged there; a challenge would be to "make a presentation." This officer felt that enlisted personnel could pass the ECLT without much difficulty; what they really needed was a test of conversational English. He also suggested that soldiers receive some kind of orientation before they reach their posts, in

which they are told what it will be like if they *do not* speak English, and that they will have to work very hard.

One supervisor suggested that the Army require a higher level of English for enlisted soldiers going into communication fields. To ensure that English language proficiency standards were maintained once soldiers began their jobs, this supervisor suggested that non-native English speakers take a test every year comparable to the test given to linguists to assess their proficiency in foreign languages.

Eight supervisors suggested, as soldiers had, that the Army offer opportunities for enlisted members to take more formal English instruction on post. Two said that formal instruction might help improve soldiers' pronunciation skills, even though one of them felt that the Army should not spend any more money on English language training. Another, a Puerto Rican himself, said that some enlisted soldiers could use *six to eight weeks* of training in which they concentrated on writing and giving oral presentations; he felt this would also help them gain confidence.

While one supervisor commented that the presence of Spanish-speaking soldiers detracted from a sense of unity in the Army, two felt that the Army should recognize the value of bilinguals in the Armed Forces. One of these said that the Army should employ more non-native English speakers as interpreters.

While recognizing the necessity for non-native speakers to speak English, two supervisors felt that native speakers should also learn to communicate with Spanish speakers. One suggested that Army leaders take a course in Spanish to better understand its speakers and the effort involved in learning a second language. The other was trying to learn Spanish himself and admired anyone who could speak two languages. According to him, "I think Spanish is our second language in the U.S. I think all of us should try a second language if we're going to stay in this country." Finally, one of the officers suggested that the Army offer a program in which all personnel were briefed about the presence of non-native English speaking enlisted soldiers in the Army.

Supervisors' Language Activity Ratings

Ten supervisors completed the Language Activity Rating in which they rated the performance of 11 enlisted personnel on common tasks that involve using English. Most completed these ratings during the interviews, while others agreed to mail us the rating form if they could not complete it during the interview.

Characteristics of raters and ratees

The ranks of the soldiers being rated ranged from E1 through E4. All soldiers were at permanent party, except for one who was at AIT. Supervisors reported having known six of the soldiers for time periods ranging from two and one-half to six months, and three for periods of time from eight to 12 months. Two did not report how long they had known their soldiers. Eight of the raters were the soldiers' first-line supervisors, one was a second-line supervisor, and one did not identify his relationship with the soldier he was rating. Nine supervisors said that they observed their soldiers daily, while two did not report how often they observed their soldiers.

Analyzing the Language Activity Rating

The discussion excludes five tasks because fewer than six supervisors reported observing the soldier carry them out. Four of these five tasks are Skill Level II tasks. Fewer soldiers might have been rated on these tasks because (1) Skill Level II tasks are tasks that soldiers should know by the end of their two-year tour of duty, and almost half of the sample of soldiers interviewed had been in the Army for no more than one and one-half years, and (2) although these tasks are listed as "common tasks" in the manual, they are not required in all MOSs.

Also, item 42a is not included in the analysis because, for this item, supervisors were asked to identify the language that the soldier speaks most often while on duty. Three supervisors left this item blank; otherwise they wrote in "English."

According to supervisors' ratings, the soldiers generally performed at least as well as other soldiers on tasks involving using English. Of those soldiers observed, at least half performed as "well as most soldiers" or better on the tasks. The performance of soldiers

on specific tasks is discussed in the sections below. In order to facilitate the discussion, some of the items have been taken out of sequence.

Oral communication. At least seven of the soldiers were observed performing the tasks involving oral communication (64%). According to supervisor's ratings, enlisted personnel generally performed adequately on these tasks, as shown in Table 5.4. Over half of those observed were rated as performing "as well as most" or better on any task (60 percent or more).

According to these ratings, while most performed about average on all tasks, these soldiers were somewhat better at understanding English than at many of the tasks involving speaking English. About three-fourths or more received ratings of "as well as most" or better on all tasks that focused on understanding English (items 14, 15, 17, and 40). Over one-third of the soldiers were rated as "better than most" on following oral instructions (item 40).

On the other hand, over one-third of the soldiers were rated as not performing as well as most soldiers on two of the general speech characteristics (items 1 and 4); in explaining in a logical, clear, consistent and forthright manner (item 8); in being understood by others (36); and in more specific tasks involving giving explanations and reporting information (items 7 and 10). These ratings are compatible with reports of soldiers and supervisors who said that some soldiers have difficulty in speaking English that is clear and understood by others, or that some soldiers are shy and lack confidence in speaking English.

Reading and writing. According to Table 5.5, soldiers were less frequently observed performing task 24, "marks equipment or areas with appropriate labels" (55%), than the other reading and writing tasks (82 percent or more).

According to the ratings, this group of soldiers performed somewhat better on tasks involving reading and writing than on oral communication tasks. A greater number of soldiers were judged as performing "as well as most" on these reading and writing tasks (at least 80 percent). None was rated as performing "inadequately" on these tasks.

TABLE 5.4. Oral Communication Tasks (N=11)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most soldiers		As well as most soldiers		Not as well as most soldiers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>Speech Characteristics</u>										
1. Speaks in a clear voice	11	100.0	--	--	6	55.0	4	36.0	1	9.0
2. Speaks at a volume appropriate for situation	11	100.0	1	9.0	7	64.0	3	27.0	--	--
3. Uses proper pronunciation	8	73.0	--	--	5	63.0	2	25.0	1	13.0
4. Overall speech quality	11	100.0	--	--	7	64.0	4	36.0	--	--
<u>Giving Explanations</u>										
5. Explains or justifies a choice if asked to	8	73.0	--	--	7	88.0	1	13.0	--	--
6. Explains how to perform a task to a supervisor	10	91.0	--	--	9	90.0	1	10.0	--	--
7. Explains an hypothetical course of action; i.e., what he or she would do given certain circumstances	10	91.0	--	--	6	55.0	4	36.0	--	--
8. Explains in a logical, clear, consistent, and forthright manner	11	100.0	--	--	7	64.0	4	36.0	--	--
<u>Reporting to Supervisor</u>										
9. Reports problems or malfunctions of materials to appropriate personnel	11	100.0	1	9.0	8	73.0	2	18.0	--	--
10. Reports on-duty observations to proper personnel	10	91.0	1	9.0	5	50.0	4	40.0	--	--
11. Reports completion of job tasks and readiness to begin another task	11	100.0	1	9.0	7	64.0	3	27.0	--	--
<u>Responding to Commands, Orders, Questions</u>										
12. Clarifies unclear orders by repeating what he or she believes to be the correct order	11	100.0	1	9.0	8	73.0	1	9.0	1	9.0
13. States disagreement with order if necessary	9	82.0	--	--	6	67.0	3	33.0	--	--
14. Understands supervisor's commands, orders, or instructions	11	100.0	1	9.0	9	82.0	1	9.0	--	--
15. Understands job-content related questions and instructions	11	100.0	1	9.0	7	64.0	2	18.0	1	9.0

*Percentages based on number of soldiers rated for task.

TABLE 5.4. (Cont.) Oral Communication Tasks (N=11)

Task or Skill	Number Observed		Better than most soldiers		As well as most soldiers		Not as well as most soldiers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>Issuing and Responding to Warnings</u>										
16. Warns or informs nearby personnel of danger	8	73.0	--	--	7	88.0	1	13.0	--	--
17. Understands and reacts appropriately to warnings issued by others	10	91.0	1	10.0	9	90.0	--	--	--	--
<u>Supervising Others (Skill Level II tasks)</u>										
27. Requests needed assistance or information	7	64.0	2	29.0	4	57.0	1	14.0	--	--
<u>General Communicative Competence</u>										
31. Communicates with fellow soldiers on the job or in training	11	100.0	2	18.0	8	73.0	1	9.0	--	--
32. Asks questions for information or clarification when necessary	11	100.0	2	18.0	8	73.0	1	9.0	--	--
33. Identifies materials or objects used on the job	10	91.0	2	20.0	8	80.0	--	--	--	--
34. Engages in job-task related conversation when appropriate	10	91.0	2	20.0	7	70.0	1	10.0	--	--
35. Makes requests when necessary according to protocol	7	64.0	--	--	6	86.0	1	14.0	--	--
36. Is understood by others	11	100.0	--	--	7	64.0	4	36.0	--	--
37. Expresses knowledge, beliefs, and opinions when necessary	11	100.0	--	--	9	82.0	2	18.0	--	--
38. Communicates with supervisor	11	100.0	2	18.0	8	73.0	1	9.0	--	--
40. Follows oral instructions accurately	11	100.0	4	36.0	4	36.0	3	27.0	--	--

*Percentages based on number of soldiers rated for task.

TABLE 5.5. Reading and Writing Tasks (N=11)

Task or Skill	Total Observed		Better than most soldiers		As well as most soldiers		Not as well as most soldiers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<u>Reading</u>										
18. Reads warnings, markings or indicators printed on weapons or other items used to carry out job tasks	10	91.0	1	10.0	9	90.0	--	--	--	--
19. Reads and understands field and training manuals when necessary	11	100.0	1	9.0	9	82.0	1	9.0	--	--
20. Reads words on scales or gauges	9	82.0	--	--	9	100.0	--	--	--	--
21. Identifies needed information in tables or charts	10	91.0	1	10.0	8	80.0	1	10.0	--	--
22. Reads posted notices, warnings, and bulletins	11	100.0	1	9.0	10	91.0	--	--	--	--
39. Follows written instructions accurately	11	100.0	3	27.0	8	73.0	--	--	--	--
<u>Writing</u>										
23. Fills out forms	10	91.0	1	10.0	8	80.0	1	10.0	--	--
24. Marks equipment or areas with appropriate labels	6	55.0	1	17.0	5	83.0	--	--	--	--

*Percentages based on number of soldiers rated for task.

The frequency of the lower ratings on oral communication tasks and the higher ratings on reading and writing tasks is consistent with the comments of enlisted soldiers and supervisors, that the soldiers generally had more difficulties with speaking than with reading and writing English.

The level of performance of this group in following both oral and written instructions was better than it was in other communication tasks. Of all the oral communication, reading and writing tasks discussed, the greatest number of enlisted members received ratings of "better than most" on following oral instructions (item 40), and written instructions (item 39).

Overall job performance and communicative competence. In this section, supervisors were asked to compare the soldiers they supervised with native and non-native English speakers on overall job performance and language competence. The ratings in Table 5.6 indicate that over half performed at least as well as most soldiers in both areas.

More enlisted soldiers received ratings of "as well as most" or better in job performance (91 percent or more) than in English language proficiency (73 percent or fewer). When rated against their non-native English speaking peers, the soldiers received more ratings of "better than most" in job performance (7) than in language competence (5). Four of the eleven enlisted members were judged as performing better than most soldiers when rated against their native English speaking peers.

Thus, most soldiers in this group appeared to perform their jobs and speak English at least adequately. While some soldiers did not seem to speak English as well as others did, this did not appear to hurt their overall job performance.

Summary of Findings

Interview data and ratings indicate that, as with officers, the overall job performance and English language proficiency of this group of soldiers were generally adequate or better. Like officers, enlisted soldiers typically had fewer difficulties with reading and writing than with speaking English. The ratings also show that soldiers in this study did better at following oral and written instructions than at performing other

TABLE 5.6. Overall Job Performance and Communicative Competence (N=11)

Task or Skill	Total Observed		Better than most soldiers		As well as most soldiers		Not as well as most soldiers		Performs inadequately	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.*	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
41. Please rate this soldier's overall job performance										
a. compared to other <u>non-native</u> English speakers:	11	100.0	7	64.0	3	27.0	1	9.0	--	--
b. compared to other <u>native</u> English speakers:	11	100.0	4	36.0	6	55.0	1	9.0	--	--
42. Please rate this soldier's language competence:										
b. How well does he or she speak English compared to all other <u>non-native</u> English speakers?	11	100.0	5	46.0	3	27.0	3	27.0	--	--
c. How well does he or she speak English compared to all other <u>native</u> English speakers?	11	100.0	--	--	7	64.0	2	18.0	2	18.0

*Percentages based on number of soldiers rated for task.

English communication tasks. In addition, ratings indicate that producing clear, understandable English was more difficult for some soldiers than was performing successfully in other aspects of oral communication, such as listening and understanding. This was also noted in interviews with soldiers and supervisors, who said that enlisted members frequently had difficulties with speaking, especially with pronunciation. Finally, according to the ratings, having lower levels of English proficiency still did not appear to affect the overall job performance of most of the persons in this group.

While both the soldiers and supervisors agreed that the English of enlisted members in this study was at least adequate, and that the English of non-native speakers tended to improve over time, several still felt that, overall, non-native English speaking enlisted personnel were not sufficiently prepared in English before reaching training or permanent party. Both soldiers and supervisors recommended that enlisted members be better prepared to speak and understand the language before beginning training or their first duty assignments, and that further opportunities for learning English be made available to them on post.

Chapter 6. Observations of ESL Instruction

In the preceding chapters, the views of officers and soldiers about the English language needs and preparation of non-native English speaking Army personnel were reported and summarized. This chapter describes the three ESL programs provided for U.S. Army personnel, presents classroom observations, and discusses the extent to which these programs appear to meet perceived needs.

The Army provides English language instruction for: officers and enlisted personnel at DLIELC; ROTC cadets at the University of Puerto Rico; and Puerto Rican National Guard enlistees at PRARNG-LC. The description of these programs is based on observations and informal interviews conducted with staff, teachers and students from July 1987 through March 1988.

Description of Army ESL Programs

DLIELC

DLIELC at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, provides English instruction for officers before they attend BOBC, and English instruction and pre-basic military training for enlisted personnel before they attend BCT. The evaluators visited DLIELC twice during the evaluation period; the first visit lasted three days, and the second visit lasted four days.

ESL program and pre-basic training for enlisted personnel

The program for enlisted personnel began in September 1985. Enlisted recruits are tested at MEPS in Puerto Rico. Those who attain a score of less than 70 on the ECLT are sent to DLIELC for a maximum of 24 weeks of English language training prior to

attending BCT. Soldiers in the program are housed in one of three squadrons at Lackland Air Force Base, apart from the allied military personnel and from native English speaking Air Force personnel.

Students are placed in classes according to their entry ECLT scores. Individual remedial tutoring with DLIELC teachers is available for soldiers who are not making normal progress. The average teacher:student ratio is one to eight. The classrooms are small; eight is probably about the maximum number of students each room can hold.

Enlisted soldiers attend English classes and language lab for six hours per day (receiving at least four hours of classroom instruction and up to two hours of language lab). They also receive two hours of supervised study hall in the afternoon, and are allowed one hour of "personal time" per day. During the study hall, soldiers primarily perform writing assignments as homework; they do not practice English conversation. No structured study time is scheduled on the weekends. There is military training in addition to the ESL instruction.

The curriculum is the American Language Course. After enlisted soldiers complete the course and reach a score of 70 on the ECLT, they are permitted to study the Block II lessons from the Functional Pre-ESL course curriculum. This curriculum, based on military content that is covered during BCT, was developed by DLIELC for use by individual installations at the time that BSEP I ESL was offered at local Army posts.

The American Language Course (ALC) was developed in 1956 for allied military personnel. Additional components of the ALC were developed in 1966 and at later dates. The ALC is a general English curriculum using the audio-lingual approach. DLIELC is currently revising the ALC to reflect recent research on language learning. The new curriculum, according to staff, will be available in 1989.

In addition to attending English classes, soldiers receive physical training and receive instruction in drill and ceremony and other military subjects. Enlisted soldiers receive 112 hours of military training over a 14-week period. We were told that because of the strong emphasis on Army training at DLIELC, soldiers are frequently appointed as platoon leaders when they attend BCT and AIT.

Enlisted members are required to speak English at all times during classes, in the barracks, and during their free periods. As reported by DLIELC students and graduates and by some DLIELC staff, however, soldiers rarely speak English outside of class. Other than their classroom experience, they generally speak Spanish when they are in the barracks or during their free periods. The evaluators observed that students tended to converse with each other in Spanish during classroom breaks.

The ECLT is administered every two weeks throughout training (there are 72 forms of the ECLT.) The OPI is given formally during the 14th and the 23rd weeks of classes to enlisted soldiers who have earned an ECLT score of 65 or better. The OPI is administered by two trained interviewers. Teachers give informal OPI ratings weekly, based on their subjective evaluation of students' improvement in comprehension and speaking.

In order to graduate from the ESL program, enlisted soldiers must achieve two ECLT scores of 70 and an OPI rating of 1+/1. If students achieve two ECLT scores of 80 and an OPI rating of 2/2, they can leave DLIELC before their scheduled graduation date. If they have been at DLIELC for at least six weeks, they can leave before their graduation date if they achieve two ECLT scores of 70 and an OPI rating of 1+/1. If soldiers attain two ECLT scores of 70 but have not received the OPI rating of 1+/1 by their scheduled graduation date, they are still sent on to BCT. According to DLIELC personnel, soldiers who do not achieve the ECLT requirement are discharged from the Army.

DLIELC's primary mission to teach soldiers English is shared with its secondary mission to provide pre-basic training to prepare soldiers for BCT. The two goals seem to conflict at times; for example, students are rarely provided the opportunity to interact with native-English speaking people, due to restrictions imposed by their military training and their relative isolation. There have also been reports of students having trouble staying awake in class after having been kept up late doing military activities; and of students having been reprimanded for missing military training because they stayed late at school to receive additional instruction in English.

ESL program for officers

DLIELC has provided language training for Puerto Rican commissioned officers since 1983. Although cadets are required to achieve an ECLT score of 80 for commissioning, staff estimated that, when officers are re-tested at DLIELC, approximately 20 percent score below 80.

Officers receive 16 weeks of instruction at DLIELC. Their DLIELC arrival date is associated with the date they are scheduled to report to BOBC, and they arrive at DLIELC in varying numbers throughout the year. Generally, a new class is begun whenever two or more officers arrive at the same time. They are placed in classes heterogeneously, and remain with the same teacher for five weeks. At the end of each five-week period, the same group of students is assigned a new teacher. If it is not possible to start a new class, the new arrivals are placed in the class that began most recently. A student who is placed in a class that is nearing the end of its first five-week cycle may be recycled into the first week of the next available beginning class.

Officers attend ESL classes for five hours, and receive one hour of language lab per day (whether this hour is used for language lab or additional instruction is at the teacher's discretion). Officers occasionally receive an extra hour of instruction, if needed. The average teacher:student ratio in the classes for officers is 1 to 5. The current curriculum, which combines the ALC with commercial texts for teaching writing, grammar, and conversation, was developed in February 1986 and has received only minor revisions since that time. One of the ALC texts teaches military conversation. At the time of our visit in February 1988, one staff member reported that more writing had been introduced recently into the curriculum to reflect new Army requirements.

To graduate from DLIELC with a diploma, officers must attain a score of 90 on the ECLT and an OPI rating of 2+/2. To graduate with a certificate, they are only required to earn an ECLT score of between 80 and 90 and an OPI rating of 2/2. Most graduate with the diploma; only a small number have graduated with the certificate. In those rare cases in which an officer does not meet the requirements for graduation after 16 weeks of instruction, an extension can be requested.

University of Puerto Rico

In March, 1988 the evaluators visited ROTC programs at two University of Puerto Rico campuses -- Rio Piedras (San Juan) and Mayaguez. Two and one-half days were spent at the Rio Piedras campus, and about three-fourths of a day was spent at the Mayaguez campus. The Rio Piedras campus is the headquarters for the ROTC program at university campuses on the eastern side of the island, called the "Eastern Region." The Mayaguez campus is the ROTC headquarters for university campuses in the "Western Region." At Rio Piedras, the ROTC headquarters is located in a temporary building across the street from the campus. The ROTC headquarters at Mayaguez is located in a building on campus.

Since 1987, English language instruction for ROTC cadets has been administered through DLIELC's Language Training Detachment. ESL instructors and administrators are hired directly through DLIELC. Prior to this, ESL instructors were hired on contract with the university campuses.

Commandants at both campuses expressed a strong commitment to providing English language training that ensured that cadets achieve adequate levels of English proficiency for commissioning and beyond. There are minor differences between the two regions in how the English language program is administered, and in the criteria used to send commissioned officers to DLIELC.

English proficiency testing

At all ROTC campuses, cadets are tested on the ECLT throughout their ROTC careers. The ECLT cut-off scores are used as one of the criteria for selecting cadets for attendance at Basic Camp, at Advanced Camp, for contracting, and for commissioning. The ECLT is administered three times in the school year -- at the beginning of fall semester (or at the end of Advanced Camp), and at the end of the fall and spring semesters.

The OPI is also administered in the second semester of the cadet's senior year. While the OPI is used to measure a cadet's comprehension and speaking skills and is one determinant of whether an officer is sent to DLIELC, it is not a criterion for

commissioning. The OPI is administered by a certified tester trained through DLIELC. ROTC staff reported that there were four certified OPI test administrators in Puerto Rico. These personnel are assisted by a team of certified testers provided by DLIELC twice a year, during the fall and spring semesters. However, ROTC personnel at Rio Piedras reported that during the fall semester prior to our visit, only 60 per cent of the cadets were tested, due to the limited availability of certified OPI administrators.

Military science (MS) and English language instruction

Students can enroll in the ROTC program for either four years or two years. The four-year program consists of a series of military science (MS) courses. The basic course is taken in the freshman (MS I) and sophomore (MS II) years; the advanced course is taken in the junior (MS III) and senior (MS IV) years. In addition, cadets attend a six-week Advanced Camp at Fort Riley, Kansas, during the summer between their junior and senior years. Students who did not enroll in the basic course can take the two-year program during their junior and senior years. (Cadets can enroll in ROTC during their senior year if they intend to pursue a Master's degree.) They attend Basic Camp for six weeks, take MS III and MS IV, and attend Advanced Camp during the summer between their junior and senior years.

According to one staff member at Rio Piedras, a typical ROTC cadet takes an average of 18 credit hours of university courses per semester, plus two to four hours of military science classes, and ROTC English classes. In addition, cadets often hold a part-time job.

The military science courses are taught in English by Army officers, while the English courses are taught by civilian English language instructors. According to staff, cadets are encouraged to speak English only, both inside and outside of class. At one campus, posters advised students of the English-only policy, called "Operation Good Lingo," but evaluators noted that some cadets spoke freely in Spanish with each other and with some military science instructors after classes.

The ESL program of instruction in both regions is based on the ALC, although there is some variability in the degree to which instructors modify or supplement this program. The English programs administered through the Rio Piedras and Mayaguez ROTC

headquarters differ in who is enrolled in the classes, and the minimum number of hours of English students take each week. Differences in administration of the English programs appear to be due partially to the differences in numbers of ROTC enrollments in the two regions. For example, the greater number of ROTC cadets at the Rio Piedras campus appears to limit enrollments in certain English classes.

In the Eastern Region, cadets take English classes for one and one-half hours each week, normally over two 45-minute periods. Enrollment in ROTC English classes is limited to those whose ECLT scores fall into certain ranges at each of the MS levels:

<u>Students enrolled in:</u>	<u>Must attend English classes if their ECLT scores are:</u>
MS I	40 or less
MS II	55 or less
MS III	Less than 75
MS IV	Less than 80

Whereas enrollments in English classes in the Eastern Region are limited to students whose ECLT scores indicate an apparent need for English instruction, attendance in English classes is mandatory for *all* cadets in the Western Region, regardless of their English language proficiency. In the Western Region, cadets enrolled in MS I and MS II take a minimum of one hour of English per week; students in MS III attend English classes for a weekly minimum of two hours. Students whose ECLT scores fall below certain levels in MS I through MS IV are identified as "language deficient," and are encouraged to attend English classes for an additional one and one-half to two hours per week. For example, a student in MS III who has a strong need for English may attend English classes for a total of four hours per week: the minimum two hours, plus the two additional hours recommended for language deficient students.

In both regions, the English classes are organized by the following levels of difficulty: Basic, for cadets with ECLT scores of 0 through 60; Intermediate, for those with ECLT scores of 61 through 75; and Advanced, for those with ECLT scores of 76 or above. An attempt is made to establish homogeneous classes based on these levels of difficulty; however, homogeneous classes are not always possible, due to scheduling limitations. In the Western Region, maintaining homogenous classes also appears to be difficult because of the mandatory English requirement for all cadets. In the more heterogenous classes, staff at Mayaguez reported that instructors are encouraged to

present more challenges to the students with higher levels of English proficiency and to give them special assignments, such as viewing technical tapes and giving short speeches on military science subject matter.

In addition to the English classes offered during the school year, two four-week cycles of English courses are also offered at ROTC campuses in the Summer English Program. This is an intensive English program in which students attend English classes for six hours per day over a period of four weeks. According to ROTC staff, the program was modeled after the English language program at DLIELC. Formerly conducted at PRARNG-LC, the Summer English Program has been offered at the University of Puerto Rico since the summer of 1987.

ROTC staff reported that the largest ECLT growth occurs during the Summer English Program. We were told that an average of 89 students were enrolled in the Summer English Program per year over the last three years, and the average yearly gain on the ECLT was about 8 points.

An elective writing class is also available in the Eastern Region for those enrolled in MS IV (typically those in their senior year in college), or for those who have an ECLT score of 75 or above. The writing class is offered for one three-hour block per week. Since this is the only elective English writing course available, enrollment has to be limited. In this class, students are assigned a range of writing tasks, which progress from writing simple sentences and paragraphs to writing essays. During the more advanced stages of the course, students are assigned compositions that show cause and effect, narratives, descriptions, and so on.

Staff at Rio Piedras reported that written communication is also covered in the military science courses. Cadets are required to complete a writing assignment at the end of each semester. The writing assignments become increasingly more challenging as cadets progress from MS I through MS IV.

According to one staff member, beginning fall semester, 1988, the elective writing course will be revised to include assignments on writing military documents, in connection with the military science instruction in these areas for students in MS III and MS IV. Assignments will include writing Disposition Forms, After Action Reviews, and so on.

Commissioning and recommendations for DLIELC

Staff at Rio Piedras presented us with figures from past years showing that most officers who complete MS IV are commissioned (an average of 90 percent between 1984 and 1987), and that most attrition occurs among cadets enrolled in MS I and MS II. Personnel in both regions agreed that dropouts from ROTC were primarily attributable to a lack of English language proficiency.

The figures in Table 6.1 were provided from Rio Piedras, but include the Mayaguez ROTC program as well. The table shows that 625 officers were commissioned, or are projected to be commissioned, in Puerto Rico between 1984 and 1988.

TABLE 6.1. Number of Officers Commissioned
Through ROTC in Puerto Rico (N=625)

School Year	Number of Officers Commissioned	Recommended for DLIELC	
		No.	Pct.
1987 - 1988	166	108	65.0
1986 - 1987	156	85	54.0
1985 - 1986	160	104	65.0
1984 - 1985	143	96	67.0
Total	625	393	63.0

An average of 156 officers have been commissioned each year since 1984; about one-third of these are from the Western Region. Staff at the Rio Piedras campus estimated that of officers commissioned in the Eastern Region, 35 percent go on active duty in the Army, 35 percent are in the National Guard, and 30 percent have reserve status.

Officers are sent to DLIELC if it is determined that they need additional English language training before attending their Branch Officer Basic Course. The criteria used to determine this need differ somewhat between regions. Those commissioned through the Rio Piedras campus are automatically sent to DLIELC if they attain an ECLT score of less than 90 and an OPI rating of less than 2+/2; other cases are decided individually.

According to ROTC staff at Mayaguez, while commissioned officers in the Eastern Region are also recommended to attend DLIELC if they do not meet these test criteria, ECLT scores and OPI ratings are not the primary criteria. Decisions about referring officers to DLIELC are also based on the campus supervisor's recommendations, and on an assessment of the officer's overall oral proficiency during an interview with the Commandant.

PRARNG-LC

The evaluators visited PRARNG-LC for one-half of a day. This school, located at Fort Allen in Juana Diaz, was established in 1976 and provides elementary and intermediate English instruction and pre-basic training to PRARNG trainees. PRARNG-LC also provided summer school English instruction to ROTC cadets from 1983 to 1986. This is now offered by the Language Training Detachment at the University of Puerto Rico.

National Guard recruits who score less than 70 on the ECLT when they are tested at MEPS are sent to the PRARNG-LC. Students stay in the program from nine to 18 weeks, depending on their entry ECLT scores.

The instructional program at PRARNG-LC includes six hours of English classes and lab per day, plus one hour each for math, military subjects, and physical training. Students have one hour of study period for four evenings a week, and one hour a week of organized sports. The English language curriculum is the ALC. The English instructors,

who are primarily warrant officers, are certified by DLIELC and the Department of Education of Puerto Rico.

PRARNG-LC personnel reported that English immersion is enforced while students are at the Language Center. Enlistees must speak English during their on- and off-duty hours on post during the week (but are allowed to go home on the weekends, where they presumably speak Spanish). The evaluators did not have an opportunity to observe the enforcement of this immersion policy outside of class; all students were either in classrooms or participating in military drills during our short visit.

Staff reported that as of February 1988, about 4500 students had graduated from PRARNG-LC. The BCT returnee rate has reportedly dropped to zero since the school was established in 1976.

Observations of Classroom Instruction and Informal Interviews with Staff and Students

DLIELC Observations

During the four days of our visit in February 1988, the evaluators observed 17 classes; 11 for officers and six for enlisted soldiers. All of the teachers appeared to be genuinely concerned about their students and strongly motivated to help them learn English.

The audio-lingual approach was the primary method of instruction. This method emphasizes learning grammatical structures and vocabulary through drill and practice, substitution, and instruction in grammar. This is in contrast with current alternative methods that favor more "communicative" approaches to language learning. Communicative language teaching employs a variety of techniques to encourage the learning of language as it is actually used in natural contexts.

Some of the classroom activities observed were of a more communicative nature. For example, in one class, students were required to prepare and give short speeches in front of the class; we learned that students also videotape their speeches once a week. (This

activity is not always so frequent; one student reported that she did not have to prepare a speech until her fifth week at DLIELC).

Teachers' comments indicated that they perceived themselves as allowing students to practice speaking English in class. However, in the classes we observed, teachers did almost all of the talking, explaining and illustrating grammar rules and vocabulary, and limiting students' oral responses to a single word or phrase. Any dialog that did occur usually took place between student and teacher-students were rarely encouraged to converse with one another.

The nature of the textbook exercises often imposed limitations on student responses. For example, in one class, students seemed to be fairly advanced, and had little difficulty doing the grammar exercises in the textbook. Yet, the exercises restricted their utterances to recitations of grammar rules such as: "change y to i and add -ed."

Teachers rarely drew on or used students' knowledge and background as a classroom resource; instead, they tended to begin explaining something before first finding out what students knew. They rarely had students explain information to each other or correct each other's mistakes (which would provide more opportunities for students, rather than the teacher, to speak). In some classes, teachers spent time reviewing vocabulary words without first determining whether students already knew them. These teachers typically read a word from the textbook, had students repeat it, read or had the students read definitions or sentences in which the word was used, and then explained the word to the class. Only as a final step would the teacher ask students to give their own examples or definitions of the word; in some cases, students were not asked to provide examples. Sometimes students displayed their knowledge of a word, without being asked, before the teacher completed all of these steps. A number of students noted later that they already knew much of the vocabulary that was being taught in class; teachers might have used this knowledge to much better advantage in these classrooms.

Overall, many students did not appear to be challenged. Classroom performance suggested that some students could have handled more difficult challenges when learning vocabulary; many showed that they were capable of producing much more sophisticated and complex language when opportunities arose. As noted earlier in this chapter, students were rarely required to offer more than one-word or short-sentence responses. Sometimes

the pace seemed too slow; in one class in which students did grammar exercises, the teacher repeated students' responses and made comments after each item, which seemed to slow the class down. In this situation, students were not required to think quickly or to challenge themselves.

In addition to observing classes, we informally interviewed four teachers (three who were teaching officers and one who was teaching enlisted soldiers). Teachers reported that they had received two weeks of training, most of which was spent observing other teachers at DLIELC. To qualify to teach at DLIELC, teachers must have two years of teaching experience. (It is not necessary to be certified nor to have experience teaching ESL.) Two of those we talked with said that they had taught at DLIELC for at least 12 years, and had prior experience teaching elementary school.

Teachers reported that they spent most of their class time focusing on speaking and listening skills; one reported that as much as 95 per cent of classroom instruction emphasized these areas. When asked about problems that Puerto Rican students had in learning English, teachers stressed the students' difficulties with pronunciation. The evaluators observed students speaking very little in the classroom. This is contrary to teachers' perceptions, and it means students have little opportunity to improve the pronunciation teachers saw as a major difficulty. It should also be noted that in our interviews with Puerto Rican Army personnel, pronunciation was one of the primary aspects of English with which both officers and enlisted personnel cited problems, and which they said they wanted to improve.

Most teachers felt that the DLIELC graduation requirement of an ECLT score of 90 was adequate. One reported, however, that "passing the ECLT does not mean they'll be fluent in English The students can go through the ALC, but it doesn't mean you can have a conversation."

ROTC Classes at the University of Puerto Rico

The evaluators observed four ESL classes and three military science classes at the Rio Piedras campus, and two ESL classes at the Mayaguez campus. While most classes lasted about an hour, three ESL classes ran from two to three hours (one of these was a writing class). The instructors of the ESL and Military Science classes we observed were

native English speakers; two of them were Puerto Rican. One of the instructors said that he held a doctorate in Bilingual Education and Curriculum, a Master's degree in ESL and Communications, had taught as a college professor for 15 years, and had taught English for ROTC for the last eight years.

ESL classes

In most of the ESL classes we observed, the content and method of instruction were similar to that used at DLIELC. In about three-fourths of the classes, teachers focused on explaining grammar and conducting structured drills; the emphasis was more on form than meaning. Students' responses were frequently limited to the short answers elicited by the textbook exercises. In two of these classes, the teacher attempted to supplement this kind of instruction with dialogs, role-plays, and exercises intended to promote some discussion. These activities provided students the opportunity to speak more, but they still limited their use of creative or natural language. In one role-play, the more advanced students were encouraged to improvise, yet the teacher told them *how* to improvise. Also, there was no preparation or subsequent debriefing for the role-plays, no corrections or review of useful expressions.

Pronunciation, an aspect of English cited as a problem for many Puerto Rican Army personnel, was rarely corrected in the classes we saw.

The level of the classes seemed too elementary for some students. In one class, the teacher reviewed a list of vocabulary words; most students had used these very words in a discussion that took place earlier in the period. A student we spoke with after another class was almost fluent in English and said that the course was too easy for him; he said that students in his group had ECLT scores ranging from 60 to 98, and that he had the highest ECLT score in the class.

In another class we observed, there was less of a focus on grammar and vocabulary exercises, and more on speaking practice. Students made oral presentations in front of the class based on articles they had read in a local English newspaper. Without correcting their grammar or pronunciation, the teacher encouraged the students to make complete statements without hesitation. There was a "military flavor" to the activity; the pace was fast, the teacher often spoke to them as if he were a drill sergeant: "Describe the article

for me SIR!" Students were highly active and alert. The teacher's stated goal was to help build their confidence in speaking English. Towards the end of the period, he said, "We have the courage to stand in front of the class and say what we want to say. We become more sure of ourselves. The same way you're gonna be when you become second lieutenants . . . I want you to be assertive." Later, in an informal interview, he reported, "You see I'm pushing them. I don't correct these [summaries], I don't care about their grammar, I don't correct their pronunciation . . . I just want to get them to open their mouths"

Both evaluators observed the elective writing class for separate periods of time. In this class, students discussed aspects of written paragraphs presented on an overhead transparency. Students discussed both the form and meaning of the paragraphs: how "sequence words" were used, how the controlling idea of the paragraph was presented. The teacher asked questions such as, "What's good about the paragraph? What's bad about it? Can you tell what the author really thinks?" This was one class in which we saw students encouraged to evaluate and think critically about a topic in English.

Military science classes

The military science classes we observed were primarily lectures, but students asked questions and volunteered answers in these settings more frequently than in the English language classes. This participation might have been due, in part, to the fact that the focus was on military content that was relevant to their Army careers; English was the medium used to impart this content.

In one of these classes, the instructor gave a "pep talk" to cadets who would be attending Basic Camp in a few months. In this lecture, he reiterated problems and concerns felt by many of the Army personnel and supervisors interviewed in the field. He highlighted issues of confidence and pronunciation problems, and imparted an awareness of the cultural differences they might encounter:

One of the things that defeats us is the language. If you're talking Spanish in front of an American guy he's gonna get offended. So if you want to make friends, give him that courtesy. Every time you start rattling on in Spanish you shoot yourself in

the foot. That's one of our worst habits. Take advantage of being there and make friends with guys from the states. Stay out of little groups and talking Spanish. . .

Speak loud. Don't be so conscious about your speech. Make sure everybody hears you. Get the point across. I have some pronunciation problems too, so it shouldn't bother you either

Eye contact is another thing. I look at everyone. You have to maintain eye contact with the audience. Don't look down. Looking down at them means you lack leadership. If you're talking to a TAC officer, look him in the eye.

One of the biggest problems we Puerto Ricans have in camp is that we are self-conscious about our speech and worried if people don't understand. If in doubt, repeat it We Puerto Ricans have language problems Other people have problems Forget about your problems, concentrate on what you're doing.

In interviews with Puerto Rican Army personnel, a few had said that they would like to see the Army provide more cultural orientation to prepare them for working in the Army and for living in the continental United States. While this type of cross-cultural orientation might be transmitted implicitly throughout a cadet's ROTC career, the "lecture" described above was the only occasion where the evaluators observed cultural concerns being dealt with explicitly in a classroom setting.

PRARNG-LC

The evaluators observed only two classes for about three-fourths of a period during the short visit to PRARNG-LC. The classes were located in a former elementary school for Navy dependents.

The English classes we saw were taught by warrant officers. Both were bilingual Puerto Ricans; one said that he had a teaching degree and had taught ESL and other English subjects at the university level. As at DLIELC, the audio-lingual method was used, and the curriculum was the ALC. But particularly notable in the classes at PRARNG-LC was the fast pace of instruction and the high degree of student involvement.

In both groups observed, students were given many opportunities to speak, and in one class, they were actively encouraged to be creative in their responses and to express their opinions. Students constantly raised their hands and spoke up without hesitation; they appeared to be physically as well as mentally involved. A certain degree of military courtesy and discipline was enforced in the room. At the end of each class, students responded to a command from the teacher with "Yes, Sir!" In both observations, they rose and saluted their instructor as they left the classroom in single file.

We also observed a training exercise that took place outside of the classrooms. As a sergeant gave different commands, the group gradually grew smaller as soldiers dropped out if they made an error. This activity was similar to what takes place during a type of ESL teaching method called "Total Physical Response," in which listening comprehension is taught by allowing students to respond physically to a series of commands.

According to PRARNG-LC staff, the program was a success, and while we did not have the opportunity to observe the enforcement of PRARNG-LC's "English-only" policy, one staff member said that the total immersion aspect of the program was the major factor in this success. Our observations and conversations at PRARNG-LC also indicated that there is a strong integration of English instruction with cultural orientation and pre-basic training. The use of military personnel to teach all courses, including English, and the military tone set in the English classes, appeared to foster this sense of a unified purpose and the integration of the goals of learning military and English skills. The administration of the program by bilingual military personnel (the teachers and staff we spoke with and observed were all bilingual Puerto Rican military personnel) may also have helped to provide appropriate role models for the enlistees.

Summary of Observations of ESL Instruction

In our interviews, officers and enlisted soldiers expressed a need to improve their conversational skills, especially their pronunciation and accent. Officers added that they needed to improve their writing skills, especially in writing military documents. At the sites in which we observed classroom instruction, these needs were addressed in varying degrees.

Administrators at all sites demonstrated a strong commitment to English language instruction, and teachers displayed a genuine concern that their students learn English. The ALC was used in each program, sometimes supplemented with commercial materials or exercises developed by instructors. The primary method of instruction was the audio-lingual approach, which emphasizes drill and practice, substitutions, and instruction in grammar. In many of the classes we saw, teachers talked more than the students, and students' responses were often limited to short utterances that displayed knowledge of a particular grammar point or vocabulary word.

Current methods of instruction favor teaching which emphasizes communicative content over form, and in which a variety of methods are used to encourage students to practice using natural language in meaningful contexts. Such "communicative approaches" were observed to a limited degree at the sites we visited. These practices included allowing students to make oral presentations in front of the class, to participate in dialogs and role plays, or simply to answer questions posed by teachers that required more creative responses than those restricted by textbook exercises. Based on the expressed needs of non-native English speaking interviewees, Puerto Rican officers and enlisted personnel would benefit from more of these kinds of communicative activities and more opportunities to speak English in the classroom -- not only with the teacher, but also among themselves.

The degree to which students were challenged varied across the classes we observed. Rarely did the material appear to be too difficult for students; more often the level of instruction appeared to be too elementary for them. The pace of instruction also varied widely. In classes conducted at a more rapid pace, students appeared to be more challenged and involved in the classroom activities.

While we observed some classes in which students were given pronunciation drills, overall, students' pronunciation was corrected only sporadically, and usually when the focus of instruction was on something else, such as grammar or vocabulary. Since non-native speaking personnel cited this as an aspect of English in which they had problems, more attention could be paid to formal instruction in pronunciation.

Only three writing classes for officers were observed. None of the sessions focused on the specific kinds of military documents that officers are required to write on the job.

However, ROTC staff indicated that they would begin offering classes focusing on this type of writing in the fall semester, 1988. The Army could continue to provide more ESL instruction in this area.

Many interviewees who had attended DLIELC said that they would have benefited from more frequent informal opportunities to speak English with native speakers outside of class. While at each site students were required to speak English at all times, informal opportunities to speak English outside of class with native speakers were limited. At the two University of Puerto Rico campuses and at DLIELC, students were observed conversing with each other in Spanish outside of class (all students at PRARNG-LC were in class at the time of our visit). At DLIELC, Puerto Rican Army personnel were housed and taught as a group, and had little contact with Air Force personnel or with the allied forces. For enlisted personnel, who are housed together in barracks on base and who spend much of their out-of-class time participating in pre-basic training activities, it is particularly difficult to find opportunities to interact with native English speaking people. Since non-native English speakers are expected to be able to speak English when they reach training and their first duty assignments, ample opportunities should be provided for them to practice using the language, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Chapter 7. Survey of Non-Native English Speaking Officers

Introduction

Purpose of the Study

One method for increasing the validity of a qualitative evaluation is to collect parallel or complementary data in several different formats or from several audiences to see if the message they relay is clear and steady. The primary source of information concerning the adequacy of English language screening and preparation had come from interviews with Hispanic personnel and their supervisors. To expand this data base, we mailed a paper-and-pencil questionnaire to officers commissioned or assigned in Puerto Rico since January 1983. The survey addressed the same basic questions of English language importance, preparation, and screening that had been covered in more depth (but with a smaller sample of respondents) through on-site interviews. These interviews had suggested that officers should be studied in more detail because their jobs called for a wider range of English language skills than did those of enlisted personnel. We also felt that officers, who generally possessed at least a baccalaureate degree and who had reported doing considerable writing in their work, would respond to essay-type written questions. The purpose of this English Language Preparation: Officer's Survey, which is reproduced in Appendix B, was to collect information that would confirm, disconfirm, or redefine the information gathered through interviews with officers. The questionnaire included a number of multiple choice items and closed questions with three open-ended questions requesting the officer's suggestions about screening non-native English officer candidates, preparing them, and improving recruitment and retention.

Sample and Response Rate

The Total Army Personnel Agency (TAPA) group at PERSINSCOM developed a computer tape that produced mailing labels for officers commissioned or assigned to duty in Puerto Rico from January 1983 through May 1988. In early June, surveys were mailed to the 349 officers in this group who were listed as residing in Puerto Rico or the continental United States. The questionnaires were printed as self-mailers, with a return address and postage included to facilitate response by the end of June.

A total of 119 surveys was returned in time for analysis and an additional 24 have been received since the 29 June cut-off date. Since we do not know what proportion of the addresses were current at the time of the mailing, we cannot calculate an exact response rate. Assuming (most stringently) that all surveys were received, the response rate was 41 percent. This seems a sufficient number to support generalizations about the sampled group. However, a high proportion of the respondents answered the open-ended questions, which require more effort than the multiple choice items. This suggests that the sample may be biased toward those who found the issues most important. And, the perceptions of other non-native English speaking groups may differ from those of the Puerto Rican respondents.

Findings

Officers' Background and Preparation

As Table 7.1 illustrates, a little over half of the officers had lived in an English-speaking country at some time before joining the Army. For almost two-thirds of this group, the experience had been an extended residency of more than five years. This may explain why about one-third of the officers judged themselves to be bilingual: equally comfortable speaking Spanish or English. Most, however reported Spanish as their primary language (64%) while a few (4%) said they were most fluent in English.

The great majority of the officers (86%) was stationed at permanent party and most were on reserve active duty status (61%). They were most likely to hold the rank of

TABLE 7.1. Backgrounds of Officers Responding to Survey (N=119)

Background Characteristic	Number	Percent
Ever lived in English-speaking country before joining Army:		
Yes	65	54.6
No	54	45.4
If yes, lived there for:		
1 to 5 years	23	35.9
6 to 10 years	18	28.2
More than 10 years	23	35.9
Missing data	1	--
Primary language:		
Spanish	76	64.4
English	5	4.2
Both Spanish and English	37	31.4
Missing data	1	--
Currently at:		
Branch Officer Basic Course	2	1.7
Permanent Party	100	86.2
Other	14	12.1
Missing data	3	--
Current status:		
Regular Army, active duty	44	37.0
Reserve active duty	73	61.3
Other	3	1.7
Current rank:		
Warrant Officer 1	9	7.6
Chief Warrant Officer 2	15	12.6
Second lieutenant	5	4.2
First lieutenant	37	31.1
Captain	50	42.0
Major	1	0.8
Lieutenant Colonel	2	1.7
Years experience as officer:		
1	15	12.7
2	16	13.6
3	30	25.4
4	22	18.6
5	28	23.7
6 or more	7	5.9
Missing data	1	--

TABLE 7.1. (Cont.) Backgrounds of Officers
Responding to Survey (N=119)

<u>Background Characteristic</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Years experience as enlisted:		
1 - 3	13	10.9
4 - 6	13	10.9
7 - 9	13	10.9
10 or more	13	10.9
Missing data/no enlisted experience	67	56.3

captain (42%) or first lieutenant (31%), although the ranks ranged from warrant officer to lieutenant colonel. Half of the group had three or fewer years of experience as an officer. Some 52 persons (42%) reported having served as an enlisted member; this group included the 24 currently holding the rank of warrant officer or chief warrant officer.

Table 7.2 provides some information about the officers' preparation. Three out of five attended ROTC, usually for fewer than four years. Only one in five had gone to DLIELC; about the same proportion had requested this residential English program. Those who did attend DLIELC were typically enrolled for the standard 16 weeks (67%). Only one person reported attending for a longer period of time.

Most of the officers thought they had been well prepared (38%) or adequately prepared (48%) in English when commissioned or assigned to duty. About one in seven felt the preparation had been minimal or inadequate.

Table 7.3 examines several possible sources of English language preparation. Officers were asked to rate how much English they had learned under a variety of circumstances. The percentages are based on the number giving a rating and exclude those who did not respond or who checked "does not apply." The officers were most likely to have been exposed to English through elementary and secondary school, college courses other than ROTC, friends and media before they came to the continental United States, and training, job, or personal contacts since joining the Army. Relatively few had lived in the continental United States as adults (the residency reported earlier must have reflected childhood experience) or attended DLIELC.

However, among those who had experience with the various potential sources of English language preparation, the officers rated exposure to English since joining the Army, living in the continental United States, and attending DLIELC as having taught them "a lot" of English. They were least likely to report having learned a lot of English through elementary and secondary school, friends and media before moving to the continental United States, or college courses. The table does not identify any single source as particularly helpful or not helpful; rather, it points out that the officers come in contact with English from a number of sources over a wide span of years.

TABLE 7.2. Army English Language Preparation
of Officers (N=119)

Preparation Area	Number	Percent
ROTC attendance:		
Yes	72	60.5
No	47	39.5
If yes, number years:		
Fewer than 4	43	59.7
4	29	40.3
Attended Defense Language Institute:		
Yes	23	19.3
No	96	80.7
If yes, number weeks:		
Fewer than 16	7	29.2
16	16	66.7
More than 16	1	4.2
Requested Defense Language Institute:		
Yes	24	20.2
No	95	79.8
Fluency of English when commissioned or assigned as officer:		
Very well prepared; no problem	45	38.1
Adequately prepared; no serious problems	56	47.5
Minimally prepared; had to work hard	16	13.6
Not prepared; English problems kept from success	1	0.8
Missing data	1	--

TABLE 7.3. Sources of English Language Preparation (N=119)

Source of English Preparation:	How Much English Learned:		
	Lot - %	Some - %	Little - %
Grew up in English-speaking surroundings (58)*	48.3	32.8	19.0
Elementary and secondary school (114)	33.3	36.0	30.7
College courses, not ROTC (110)	36.4	40.0	23.6
ROTC classes in college (65)	40.0	41.5	18.5
Books, movies, TV, friends before U.S. (94)	34.0	39.4	26.6
Lived continental U.S. as adult (28)	67.9	14.3	17.9
Defense Language Institute (23)	60.9	39.1	0.0
Since Army - training, job, spouse, friends (90)	72.2	21.1	6.7

*Number indicating English learned through this source.

English Proficiency Screening

As Table 7.4 shows, most of the officers had some exposure to methods of screening their English language ability. About three out of four had been tested in English, many at more than one point in their military careers. About half of the officers had taken English tests in ROTC. About one-fourth had been tested at BOBC (28%) or some other Basic or Advanced Course training (24%).

About half (49%) of the officers who rated the quality of this screening thought it worked well, admitting those who had adequate mastery of English to succeed in the Army. Smaller proportions thought the standards were too lax and admitted candidates who could not succeed (19%), or too harsh and excluded those who could have been successful (11%). About one in six officers was not aware of English language screening or felt unable to judge its effectiveness.

TABLE 7.4. Experiences with Army English Proficiency Screening (N=119)

	Number	Percent
Mastery of English tested at:		
Military Enlistment Processing Station (MEPS)	20	16.8
Reserve Officer Training Corps	56	47.1
Branch Officer Basic Course	33	27.7
Other Basic Course/Advanced Course	29	24.4
Other (college, National Guard interview, etc.)	4	3.4
Never took a test of English	28	23.5
Army screens English ability of non-native English officers before first duty:		
Very well; admits all who have enough English to succeed	52	49.1
Too harshly; excludes candidates who could succeed	12	11.3
Too lax; admits those who cannot succeed	20	18.9
Can't say; never screened; not aware of standard screening	19	17.9
Other (no good programs; let them attend DLIELC; health professional screening is good)	3	2.8
Missing data	13	--

Some one-third of the officers had taken the ECLT and evaluated the test as shown on Table 7.5. About half of these soldiers felt the test was just right, and measured the English needed for Army life (47%). Approximately one-third disagreed, and thought the ECLT did not measure those English skills required in the Army (30%). None of the respondents judged the ECLT to be too difficult, but several felt it was too easy and that the standard should be raised (12%).

Only 27 officers had taken the OPI and could rate its usefulness. Of that group, more than half judged the OPI to be an accurate measure of the English they needed (59%); fewer than one in five felt it was off-target in the skills it assessed (19%).

TABLE 7.5. Ratings of English Comprehension Level Test (ECLT) and Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) (N=119)

Of Those Taking Tests, Rating:	ECLT (N=66)		OPI (N=27)	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Just right; measures English needed for Army	31	47.0	16	59.3
Too hard; standard higher than needs to be	0	0.0	2	7.4
Too easy; standard needs to be raised	8	12.1	1	3.7
Test does not measure English skills that are needed	20	30.3	5	18.5
Other	7	10.6	3	11.1

Difficulties With English

The officers were asked if they had any difficulties with the English language at various points in their careers or with any of the requirements of an officer's role. Their answers are reported in Table 7.6. As in other questions, the percentages shown on this table are based on the number of officers giving a rating to each item.

The point at which an officer was most likely to encounter difficulties with English was as an enlisted member. Enlisted service was reported as a time of "many" such problems by about one-fourth of those who had such experience. The only situations for which one-fourth or more of those responding reported "some" or "many" problems with English were enlisted service (54%), BOBC (25%), and first duty assignment (25%). They were least likely to report difficulties now in dealing with subordinates or superiors, and only about one in ten thought English might be a problem in future career growth.

The officers were equally sanguine about their ability to handle English language tasks. More than four out of five reported no problems at all in reading or understanding spoken English. Only one in five thought he or she had "some" or "many" difficulties in writing English, speaking English with correct grammar and vocabulary, or speaking with an acceptable accent. Of the five respondents who added an English problem to the list, one noted problems with "25-cent words" and four said they had difficulties understanding regional American accents or slang words.

Suggestions for Improvements

A number of officers wrote suggestions for improving English language screening and preparation. Their comments are summarized in this section, and reproduced in Appendix C. Readers are encouraged to refer to the appendix since a summary cannot do justice to the variety of ideas that were offered.

Screening officer candidates. About two dozen officers suggested that the Army could better screen officer candidates to ensure that they began their careers with adequate English by enforcing formal language assessment, and by beginning this early in ROTC. There were suggestions that the OPI be mandatory, and that English comprehension tests be administered to all non-native English nationalities. The

TABLE 7.6. Officers' Ratings of Difficulties with English Language (N=119)

Difficulties Encountered:	Percent Rating:			
	Many	Some	Few	None
At various points in your career:				
In college ROTC (72)*	4.2	19.4	18.1	58.3
In ROTC Advanced Camp (70)	7.1	18.6	24.3	50.0
As enlisted member (54)	27.8	25.9	22.2	24.1
In Branch Officer Basic Camp (94)	3.2	21.3	25.5	50.0
On first duty assignment (112)	7.1	17.9	27.7	47.3
Now, dealing with subordinates (110)	0.9	4.5	17.3	77.3
Now, dealing with superiors (112)	2.7	8.0	17.9	71.4
In my future career (106)	2.8	8.5	18.9	69.8
In requirements of role as officer:				
Reading English (116)	0.0	4.3	9.5	86.2
Writing English (116)	7.8	13.8	32.8	46.7
Speaking with correct grammar and vocabulary (116)	1.7	15.5	48.3	34.5
Speaking with acceptable accent (115)	4.3	15.7	33.9	46.1
Understanding spoken English (116)	0.9	2.6	13.8	82.8
Other--regional or southern accents, slang, "25-cent words" (5)	60.0	40.0	0.0	0.0

*Percentages based on number rating item, which is shown in parentheses; excludes blank and "not applicable" responses.

respondents recommended that screening of cadets begin as soon as they enter ROTC, and that the ECLT be administered to students as freshmen in college so they could realize how much English they needed to learn. One officer pointed out that it is MOS performance that counts -- and that if English proficiency is necessary for job performance, then the requisite English skills (particularly spelling and writing) should be tested regardless of the individual's native language.

The next most frequent category of suggestions (about a dozen) reflected a need for different testing, which would focus more on the skills called upon in a military setting. There were general comments that tests should be more realistic. There were also detailed suggestions, such as that all officers (not just Puerto Rican) should go through formal orders and briefings drills, or that individuals recruited outside the continental United States should be subjected to an informal interview and an essay test. Interviews and writing were cited in other suggestions. Several officers felt that an essay writing test would be more difficult than a test of speaking or of oral comprehension, others mentioned that more pre-Army training in writing would help. Interviews would help to identify language needs, and one officer suggested a lengthy interview before cadets are sent to ROTC Advanced Camp. A few stressed that interviews should be conducted by persons with standard American English accents, or by military personnel.

Some of the remarks about screening procedures concerned education. Coursework at DLIELC should be widely available, and officers who feel they need it should be allowed to attend even if their screening test scores are high. Continuing education opportunities, especially to improve writing skills or to develop a standard accent, should be available. And, both the work and training settings ought to enforce the constant use of English. One of the few criticisms of DLIELC was that the school was in a setting that made it too easy to communicate in Spanish.

One officer stressed the importance of preparation by writing, "Don't close the door to P.R. English is our second language; we do our best to learn when we come to the Army." Another echoed this opinion as,

"I suggest that a conversational English test be given prior to active duty and if any barriers are identified, they get the opportunity to improve. It is extremely difficult

to adapt to the transition from being a civilian to [the] Army, and this is much more difficult with a language barrier"

Preparing officers in English. The second open-ended item asked the officers to share any suggestions they could make about how the Army might better prepare non-native English speaking officers. The most frequent remarks concerned DLIELC, suggesting that attendance be made mandatory (or at least available) for all non-native English speaking officers. One respondent wrote:

"The Army shall allow non-native English-speaking officers the opportunity to attend DLI. It gives you the opportunity to get used to the language used; also it gives you a lot of confidence so when you go to your BOBC you feel more comfortable with the language."

Several individuals volunteered that DLIELC was doing a fine job and probably taking care of most of the Army's English instruction needs. However, there were some suggestions that this language school or other programs could be improved. A few officers thought that English language instruction should be individualized on the basis of the student's abilities; others, that instruction could be more "realistic" or reflective of military needs. For example, one officer said non-native speakers should be taught the difference between slang and proper English -- because they were tested on correct English but actually needed military slang on the job.

When specific ways to improve English language instruction were offered, they covered a range of topics. Some felt that bilingual instructors would be more effective than those who spoke only English. There were a number of suggestions that instruction focus strongly on conversation to give practice in using English and in public speaking. Writing was the second subject area in which more instruction was advised; only two officers suggested more assistance in developing a standard American English accent.

If attendance at DLIELC was the most common suggestion, it was followed by recommendations for increasing English language instruction and demands during ROTC. One person went so far as to suggest that the Army pay for English courses for cadets in ROTC as an incentive and a career development opportunity. Others suggested that some

ROTC training be held in the continental United States, or that classes such as Army writing be given in the third and fourth years of ROTC.

About a dozen officers thought that English would best be learned in an intensive or "immersion" environment. One wrote, "the only way someone can really learn any language is actually going to a country that speaks that language and staying for a period of time." Others recommended that BOBC training be preceded by a week of intensive training in English for those who needed it, or that Hispanic officers attending DLIELC should be housed with non-Spanish speakers.

The idea that English language deficiencies should be corrected before further training or commissioning was expressed by several officers. Their comments were generally that English ability needed to be tested at several points or that proficiency ought to be a prerequisite for training. A few respondents wrote that officer candidates should be screened for English proficiency and those who did not meet the standards should not be commissioned.

Two final points should be brought out. One was a comment from an officer who wrote that the problem was not limited to non-native English speakers, and that the standard should be whether the message was understood by the audience -- not whether the speaker was Hispanic. The second point was that second language fluency takes time to develop. As one officer explained it, "DLI and English courses help, but [the] senior officer must assist in the development"

Other suggestions. The final item asked the officers to record any other suggestions to improve the Army's recruitment and retention of qualified non-native English speaking officers. Several recommended pre-commissioning screening or expanded English instruction during ROTC to ensure that an officer had adequate mastery of English before assuming active duty. Others suggested that continuing education in English be available after commissioning or active duty assignments; two stressing that it was important to allow beginning officers the time to take English classes if they were needed.

There were six suggestions that new officers be placed in a position in which their Spanish skills would be an asset. This would be of benefit to the Army, as one officer explained:

"The Army should screen all the records and use the already Spanish-speaking officers in assignments that require Spanish-speaking officers; this way we could serve the Army better and the Army could also save millions in school training."

It would also help the new officer adjust to Army life:

"Use them in a country that will speak their native language. The personnel on the base or post will speak English, so they will learn from that experience and they will feel more relaxed"

A few other comments noted that a newly commissioned officer speaking English as a second language needed some support to feel a "part of the team" or to develop cohesion within a unit. Several others pointed out that these officers are also establishing their evaluation records at the same time they are first using English in a work situation-- "speaking to learn" rather than "learning to speak." One respondent wrote,

"For a non-native English-speaking officer the initial three years in the Armed Forces are critical, the system does not allow for a language learning period. The rating the officer receives during his initial assignment in oral communications or skills does not reflect the actual learning that the rated officer has achieved, and in most cases this rating could result in the officer not being selected for retention."

However, if there were suggestions that initial English difficulties should not be a handicap in an officer's later career (when he or she had presumably corrected these weaknesses), these were not requests for special consideration. Several officers specifically noted that officers ought to be judged on the basis of their work, not their native language. One wrote, "non-native English speaking officers should be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they can do a good job." Another stated,

"I have been told since I first enlisted in the U.S. Army that 'we' the Hispanics were excellent soldiers and I strongly believe that because of our language limitations we should not be discriminated [against] But I also believe that we should take

upon ourselves the responsibilities of becoming more fluent in the English language
...."

One final comment summarizes the entire range of suggestions:

"Treat non-native English-speaking officers as officers, like any American officer would like to be treated. The key word is: listen to what we are saying and don't concentrate so much on our accent or nonverbal gestures. Be creative. Allow that good soldier to participate in other projects."

Summary

The opinions collected through this written survey agree basically with those expressed by a smaller sample of officers in personal interviews. English proficiency is felt to be important in an officer's career; in general, officers are perceived to be adequately screened and prepared before they begin active duty. However, screening could be improved by focusing on the skills that are most difficult or most important for officers, such as conversation and writing. Preparation could be improved by making DLIELC more widely available, increasing the amount of direct English instruction in or surrounding ROTC, and teaching English in a setting that forces the student to use only that language. Additionally, it would help retention if initial officer evaluations could *recognize that the officer was still acquiring English*; and it could be of practical use to the Army to place these officers in positions that took advantage of their Spanish skills.

We should remember that this survey was returned by a "twice selected" group: these were officers who had the abilities and motivation to remain in the Army and who were interested enough to complete the questionnaire. Many felt themselves to be as comfortable in English as in Spanish. The opinions they hold and the experiences they remember may not be the same as those who did not persist in military training or a career.

Chapter 8. General Themes and Findings

Purpose

This chapter describes and illustrates general themes reflected in interviews with Puerto Rican officers and enlisted personnel and observations of ESL classrooms. The chapter also presents an analysis of the ECLT that suggests possible reasons why performance on the test has not been strongly related to other indicators of success in the Army. The primary aim of this analysis is to provide more understanding of the factors affecting English language acquisition and training among Puerto Rican personnel by synthesizing data from many sources -- information that can act as a basis for decisions about screening and standard setting.

A second purpose is to provide a framework for making sense of the contradictions that seem to be present in the data discussed so far. On the one hand, Puerto Rican personnel appear to master the content measured by the ECLT and the OPI, yet on the other hand their performance on these tests does not appear to have much relationship to success on the job. Second, Puerto Rican personnel are generally perceived by native-English speaking supervisors as having adequate English to do their jobs; yet they themselves complain that there are areas in which language weaknesses work against them. And third, though supervisors praise Puerto Ricans as good soldiers and officers, Puerto Ricans themselves express concern about not meeting promotion or reenlistment criteria.

This chapter considers two related issues that appear to play an important role in explaining the above inconsistencies. The first is the match between the language skills Puerto Rican personnel are in fact taught and screened on and the factors upon which success actually hinges. The second is the way in which cultural factors interact with language learning and job performance.

The analysis in the first section of this chapter deals with three related areas: instruction, language acquisition, and the relationship between language and job performance. The second section concerns ECLT- and OPI-related issues.

Instruction: The Role of Communication in Language Learning

The remarks in this section draw upon observation and interview data collected primarily at DLIELC and at ROTC English programs in Puerto Rico.

As noted in the previous chapters, many interviewees expressed a need for more opportunity to practice speaking English, particularly while enrolled in formal English training programs. However, it is important to note the distinction between simply speaking more English, and speaking more English that is genuinely communicative. For example, a teacher might increase the number of spoken exercises in a class, but this would not necessarily allow students to practice communicating in English. And for many interviewees what was most important were opportunities to communicate in English -- that is, chances to express ideas and opinions, to have genuine focused conversations, to talk about things that they felt a *need* to express. They were not interested in just more drill and practice classroom talk, or talk about dialogs in texts that no one was really interested in. As one interviewee said, "Put the guy in a situation where he has to talk."

In the classrooms we observed, the speaking tasks that students were usually required to engage in, with a few exceptions, were not ones in which they felt this need to talk. Thus, a primary criterion for "natural" communication -- having a message that requires expression and response -- was not met. Thus it is not surprising that many interviewees felt that military experiences subsequent to formal language training afforded better opportunities to improve their English, since these offered continuous involvement in situations where real communication was required.

Of course, to some extent communication in the classroom is always artificial, in that it occurs in a "safe" environment removed from the real life situations in which listeners are not always patient and helpful. But it is outside the classroom that language skills really count. Interviewees sometimes noted that the English they spoke in classrooms was not what they really needed to survive in the world. One explained in

detail how he had not been able to make a waitress in a local restaurant understand him -- though he was doing well enough with English in the classroom.

Language as Communication vs. Language as Subject

This problem reflects, perhaps, the difference between teaching (and learning) language *as a subject* and teaching (and learning) language *as a medium for communication*. It is commonly recognized in literature on second language pedagogy (as noted in Chapter 6) that the primary focus in language instruction ought to be upon communication in the language to be learned; yet in most of the classrooms observed the focus was upon teaching about English rather than encouraging students to use English. Thus English became a subject matter to be studied, rather than a medium for communication.

This point is illustrated by notes taken during observations of English classes.

The teacher is taking students through a vocabulary drill. He reads each word from the vocabulary list, students repeat it, and then he explains it by reading sentences from the book. Sometimes he asks such questions as:

Teacher: What is a meal?

Student: I got a meal card. I use it every day

Teacher: Yes, I know you know what it is, but explain it

This exchange reveals a number of points. If the teacher knows that the student knows the answer, why ask? The question itself lacks any sort of communicative value, because it asks for information that is not in doubt for either party. For the teacher, the main value of the question thus lies not in using language to communicate, but in using language only in its secondary sense, to talk about language -- to "explain" meal, without *using* the word.

However, the student's response to the question illustrates an attempt to use the word in a natural communicative context, as opposed to the explanatory, non-com-

municative context provided by the teacher. Using the word in a sentence simultaneously demonstrates knowledge of the word's meaning as well as ability to use the word in an everyday context.

Other examples follow:

The vocabulary word is "reason." The teacher reads the word, and then the sentences from the text. One student volunteers, again without being asked:

My reason for putting vaseline on my boots is to shine them.

Again, the student is providing a real communicative context for the word that is lacking from the teacher's approach. At another point in the lesson, the teacher attempts to get the students to guess the word "tip" by describing it as follows:

Teacher: The money that you leave on the table for the waiter -- What is that called?

Student: [Says "tip" in Spanish.]

Teacher: I know you know it in Spanish . . .

Student: [Asks question] How much do you tip . . .?

In this exchange, the student clearly understood the word "tip" from the beginning. By responding to the teacher's question in Spanish -- when it is obvious that the main point of the question is to get the student to say the word in English -- the student subtly rejects the teacher's approach to teaching the word, and instead uses the English word in a real question designed to get information. The student once again demonstrates an ability to use English to communicate -- thereby supplementing the teacher's approach. This again emphasizes the fact that what Puerto Rican students need is not more study of *English*, but more communication *in English*.

Even at the lowest level of English proficiency (supposedly the level at which students lack "creative" language use, according to one DLIELC staff member) students demonstrated both the ability and the desire to use language in precisely these "creative" and communicative ways. Observations of one of the lowest level classes illustrate this point quite clearly.

This particular class had only three students. The teacher's approach was to use very basic pattern drills to teach grammar structures. Vocabulary words were taught using the same method as in other classes. At one point while explaining the word "sweat" the teacher said, "Men sweat and women perspire." The teacher provided the sentences illustrating the meaning of sweat; students did not participate. Finally one student volunteered the comment,

"If you tell the drill sergeant 'no sweat' you're gonna start to sweat."

Obviously this student had a much more sophisticated knowledge of the meaning and uses of 'sweat' than the teacher realized -- knowledge which could have been used in very productive ways. Students naturally "suggested" ways in which the classroom could be made more a place for communication.

At another point, during the teacher's explanation for the word "aisle," a student volunteered, "We have aisles in computers" Though "aisle" is not the correct word, (what the student probably meant was "paths" or "circuits") the teacher did not elaborate on this or point out the possible alternatives for "aisle"; he merely said, "No, I don't know much about computers but I never heard of aisles in computers." When the student insisted, the teacher said, "Well, I'll check on that and let you know."

Teachers' Views of Students' Language Competency

Despite the fact that teachers gave evidence of being competent, caring, and devoted to helping their students achieve as much as possible, the above examples also show that teachers sometimes held rather limited views of students' language competency. The particular teacher described in the preceding section dismissed the student's comment about aisles rather categorically, instead of trying to understand what the student meant in the context in which he was speaking (computers). Instead, he simply classified the student's comment as "wrong." In the other class, the teacher simply ignored students' attempts to "use" the vocabulary words, particularly in questions requesting information, instead preferring to rely on text-based sentences that lacked communicative value.

Moreover, the style of questioning used by this teacher and some of the others was primarily close-ended -- that is, framed in a yes/no format. Yes/no questions do not

facilitate language learning very effectively, since they do not require students to formulate answers. For example, the teacher asked, "Do you think x?" (instead of the more open-ended "What do you think?") or "Did your father teach you x?" (instead of "What did your father teach you?") Close-ended yes/no questions do not encourage students to use English, and thus do nothing to contribute a communication focus in classrooms.

A similar problem was evident in more advanced classes, where there was some attempt to get students to use the language by having them make up sentences using particular verb tenses, for example. Yet these exercises were often no more communicative than drills or yes/no questions. In one class, the teacher was explaining the past perfect tense. He read sentences from the text illustrating how the tense was used, and then progressed to asking students questions using the tense. Students, however, answered the questions normally and adequately without using the verb structure, as people usually do in "real life" language.

For example:

Teacher: "Where had he gone?"

Student: "To the movies." (instead of "He had gone to the movies.")

This prompted the teacher to tell the students: "You're gonna listen to the question and then repeat the structure in your answer" -- thereby placing the emphasis once more not upon natural use of language -- the use students appeared to prefer -- but upon "artificial" English.

Thus, even in advanced classes, there appeared to be a lack of communicative focus in the English instruction. Student comments that the level of instruction was not challenging enough ought therefore to be interpreted not only in the sense that much of the material being taught them was not new, but in the sense that the material was presented in ways that were not allowing them to engage in communicative language use. As one student said about the English program, "Definitely we're learning, of course -- but -- we have to really practice communication. Using headphones in the lab is not communication" Thus it would appear that much of the language that is being

taught in English programs is not the language that Puerto Rican officers and soldiers say they need in their Army lives outside the classroom.

Factors Affecting Language Learning and Language Performance

Competence/Performance and Self-Confidence Issues among Puerto Rican Military Personnel

Language educators have long drawn a distinction between competence and performance in second language learning. Competence refers to that body of linguistic knowledge that a person has about a language; performance is how that person's knowledge is translated into actual language use. Interview data support the notion that among Puerto Rican personnel, a crucial factor in language performance is self-confidence, and that without adequate confidence, performance suffers -- even though competence may remain at a high level.

Interviewees said:

"That's the main problem, confidence, you know"

"The most important quality for a Puerto Rican to be successful in the Army is self-confidence. One of the native Puerto Ricans' problems is lack of self-confidence, especially in how they communicate. They're afraid to make mistakes."

". . . The comprehension is there, but they don't feel free to speak Most Puerto Rican people, they feel afraid."

Confidence seems to be important because it influences important dimensions underlying performance -- the willingness to speak out, take risks, socialize in English, express oneself. That these factors are critical in communication is evident from one officer's description of a classmate who had to leave the Army:

"Academically he was better than me, but he was reserved, he didn't express himself, he didn't socialize with other guys. He was poorly evaluated because of

communication. He was forced to leave the service. He didn't know how to communicate well enough to defend himself, to show motivation"

Thus, there are other factors involved in communication besides competence, or knowledge of a language. One interviewee put it this way: "The English program alone is not enough. The average Puerto Rican has had 12 years of English." Instead, what is needed is more effort directed toward building Puerto Ricans' confidence and motivation -- programs in which ". . . Americans would work together with Puerto Ricans" to accomplish these aims. This interviewee seems to be saying that a focus needs to be placed upon communication skills in English -- in the broad, performance based sense -- rather than upon simply teaching more grammar, vocabulary, etc., apart from a focus on using language as a whole to communicate. Another interviewee said,

The Army puts a lot of emphasis on communication Communication is [the] most important [thing], but language is only a part of communication

Other, more important qualities that underlie communication are confidence, leadership, the ability to motivate people. These things need to be expressed through language, but they are not equivalent to language. This is a crucial difference that the Army English program as it currently stands appears to overlook. English instruction, according to interviewees' comments, needs to be closely integrated with practice in using English to meet real communication needs of Army life.

Types of Learners--Integrative vs. Instrumental Adaptation Among Puerto Rican Personnel

Closely related to the issues of competence and performance among Puerto Rican personnel are factors affecting adjustment to job roles and military culture. Adequate language learning and performance appear to be affected by the type of cultural adaptive orientation held by an individual. As pointed out by one officer, there are:

". . . two groups of Puerto Ricans in the Army. One is really proud, gung-ho, they want to accomplish their mission; then you have the type who don't believe in what they're doing. It's just a job to them. The first group speaks English much better. The others just hang out together, speaking Spanish."

The difference between these two groups, he explains, is in the way they experience their identity as Puerto Ricans. The first group believes it is possible to integrate fully into one's military role and American life without losing one's identity as a Puerto Rican. The second group feels that such integration poses a risk to Puerto Rican cultural identity: they say, "I'm Puerto Rican, so I do things this way." For them, success in the Army would mean ". . . breaking with Puerto Rican heritage." Judging from the remarks made by this officer, the second group appears to adapt only instrumentally to the demands of the military situation, without experiencing full commitment to the transformation of identity that integration into the culture of the American military demands. They therefore seem to learn English only as a means to a limited end -- doing a job -- rather than as a means toward self-transformation and integration into a new culture. Their English is, not surprisingly, much less fluent and native-like than that of those Puerto Ricans who are able to integrate at a deeper level with American military culture, yet still retain a sense of Puerto Rican identity.

Another officer interviewee also described "two groups" of Puerto Ricans. His description focused on the distinction between those who have the desire to learn U.S. culture and language, and those who don't:

There are two types of people in Puerto Rico, the urbanites, who have seen the success of the American economy, and know they need to learn English in order to move up in the world. Then you have the rural people, when they leave home, they miss everything. When they are exposed to city life they feel they have to set their culture aside. They dream of going back

According to this officer, for one group of Puerto Ricans, learning American culture and language is positive, a source of success in the world; for the other, it means loss of tradition and identity. This officer goes on to indicate how important it is for Puerto Ricans to learn a different language and a different culture -- to get beyond the "threat" to identity that such learning entails:

We [Puerto Ricans] tend to be one family. We tend to socialize a lot together anywhere we go, so that means in the U.S. we just limit ourselves. It takes years to break the habit. Insular Puerto Ricans have told me they're afraid, that they will need years But they don't have years now, because of competition, cutbacks. The Army is weeding out those who can't cut it. In the beginning if you don't start overcoming your fears you won't make it as a career officer, not in today's Army. You have to act now. You have to have that self-confidence.

But most of them are too traditional, that's why they're hesitant. That's their culture. They're strangling themselves.

If the perspectives of the two officers whose comments have just been quoted are correct, it would appear that Puerto Ricans must deal with critical cultural issues underlying their acquisition of English in the Army. Their key to success seems to lie in adopting an integrative approach toward their learning, one in which they are able to "set Puerto Rican culture aside" -- yet not experience this learning as negative or as a threat to cultural identity. This sort of approach could be facilitated by more explicit recognition of and attention to cultural factors affecting Puerto Ricans and Americans in the military.

The Impact of Cultural Differences on Language and Job Performance

What are these cultural factors? Interviewees noted that there are significant cultural differences to which they must adjust if they are to be successful in the Army. One officer said that he had wanted to go to DLIELC to get used to the military, because he had heard that it helps with the "cultural adjustment." However, his English was too good, so he couldn't go. He continued:

Cultural differences are important. One Puerto Rican guy -- even though he spoke English well, he had shocks. All the Hispanics were brought to the drill sergeant's office. The drill sergeant was angry, and he asked, "Who here speaks English?"

Finally, because everyone was silent, he volunteered to speak, and "got nailed."

The way the drill sergeant talks to you ... they're not here to be friendly. Some care, some don't. It's hard to go to the drill sergeant. But you have to.

For new enlistees, one of the big shocks was having ". . . somebody yelling in their faces when they don't understand the language."

Supervisors also said that cultural factors are important to Puerto Ricans' success in the Army. One said,

Cultural factors definitely play a role in adjusting to Army expectations. If they're going to bring in Puerto Ricans, they have to train them Social things might

help I don't know Puerto Rican culture, but I'm sure the things [going on here] have some cultural aspects.

... The main point is attitude and being communicative.

According to this supervisor, Puerto Ricans need more training in the "social things" -- especially in "being communicative." This points out one area in which Puerto Ricans are felt to lack the necessary cultural communication skills of assertiveness and aggressiveness.

Recognition of the "cultural" problems that Puerto Ricans have in the Army seems to go hand in hand with recognition of language difficulties. The list below, gleaned from interview data and from a classroom lecture given by a Puerto Rican colonel to a military science class, summarizes some of the socio-cultural difficulties that appear to affect Puerto Ricans in the Army:

- Extreme respect for and deference to authority, resulting in lack of confidence in asking questions or expressing a contrary opinion, even when given the opportunity to, or in "self-defense." (This is variously interpreted by Americans as lack of assertiveness, shyness, lack of "backbone," or simply "being non-communicative.")
- Fear of ridicule or being "laughed at," or of being singled out by making an error, even an "honest" error. A certain degree of "self-consciousness," especially when required to stand apart from the group in any way. (Again, this contributes to hesitancy in expressing oneself in English.)
- Strong identification with and tendency to form in-groups, whether based on family relations, friendship, or cultural similarity. Fear of ostracism.
- Sociability and sensitivity to proper demeanor, preserving sense of interpersonal harmony and good-will, and demonstration of care and concern for welfare of others, regardless of status or position.
- Tendency to take a "personal" view of human relations, to take what Americans interpret as "role behavior" more personally. (For example, feeling personally

threatened by sergeants ". . . getting close to your face, screaming, calling you names . . .")

- Behavioral characteristics associated with cultural values of respect, modesty, interpersonal closeness -- avoidance of direct eye contact with superiors; non-aggressive tone of voice; lots of physical contact, touching among equals and between teacher and students.

This is not an exhaustive list, but only an indication of some of the areas in which cultural differences may affect language performance among Puerto Ricans. In order to address the language communication needs of Puerto Ricans adequately, Army training would need to provide more focus on and practice in developing social communication skills -- for example, practice in being assertive or "standing up for oneself" in English, or training in aspects of non-verbal communication that accompany verbal strategies.

Moreover, as some American supervisors suggested, Army leaders should recognize that cultural adaptation is ". . . always a two-way learning process." One said,

We concentrate on teaching OUR way, but it should go both ways. Both sides need attention. The Army can benefit a lot if soldiers are taught Spanish.

It is important for Puerto Ricans and Americans to learn about each other, to "understand where the other guy is coming from." Without a foundation for cultural understanding, there would seem to be barriers to successful communication that go beyond language.

The Role of Pronunciation and Accent in the Perception of Language and Job Competence

One of the more important "barriers" identified in this study is the way in which accent or pronunciation⁶ affects how native English speaking supervisors perceive Puerto Rican job performance. According to interviewees, pronunciation appears to be critical primarily because it affects one's self-presentation, or one's *image*, and nearly everyone

⁶Although linguists would draw a distinction between the terms pronunciation and accent, with problems in pronunciation a possible source of interference in comprehension, and accent generally not interfering with comprehension, interviewees tended to use both terms interchangeably.

recognized the importance of image to being successful in the Army. A poor accent was felt to interfere with the image of competence that is necessary for success. Interviewees said:

For an officer, the most important factor for success is self-presentation, image. Speech is very important in anything involving personnel, because it affects one's image You end up looking dumb [if you have a bad accent] and if you look dumb you're weeded out.

I want to speak English -- perfect English. I don't want to have that accent. I'm proud of being Puerto Rican, but I want to be a good English speaker to do my work good.

They evaluate me based on how good I speak. The Army puts a lot of emphasis on communication. There is a preconceived idea that if you don't speak well you don't work well. You have to fight to prove it.

They think we're not capable of doing things [because of language] and that's not right. I accomplish my responsibilities; I have loyalty. I give 100 percent to improve myself. But when I first got here I had to face a major -- he made me feel like I was nothing. That made me want to prove myself. Every time you mention to somebody that you have a problem with language, they think that's not professional.... Sometimes they need me for something but they don't tell me, they don't choose me. I'm the last choice. They're not sure I can do the job.

And, as a supervisor said about one of his Puerto Rican subordinates:

He wouldn't be my first choice to get the job done. He knows the job, but....

Though native English speaking personnel readily state that their Puerto Rican subordinates know their jobs and perform them at least adequately, if an officer or soldier has pronunciation problems or a "bad accent" he or she is not in fact perceived to be as capable as a native speaker. Interviewees thus appeared to be correct in believing that native English speakers' views of their job competency were influenced by how well they spoke English, and in particular, by how much of an accent they had. A heavy accent interferes with one's image and one's success. When asked how he had managed to acquire a nearly perfect native English speaker's pronunciation, one officer said:

The Spanish accent doesn't fit into what I'm doing now. I'm not ashamed of being Puerto Rican, but for now, for the career, it doesn't fit in.

He claims that his success is based on the desire to lose the accent and to learn English well.

Improvement of accent and pronunciation is therefore an important need for Puerto Ricans in the Army. An equally important need, however, is for native English speakers to become more tolerant of accented speech, by becoming aware of the ways in which it affects their perceptions. Deviations from standard pronunciation are not to be regarded as indicators of a poor military image or lack of job competence, but simply as differences.

Assessment Measures: The ECLT and the OPI

The analysis in this section is based on notes taken during an actual administration of the ECLT at DLI. The observer was given a copy of the written parts of the test, and listened to the taped portion of the test along with the students. In this section, altered sample items from the test have been included in order to illustrate certain points. Despite these changes, an attempt has been made to preserve as much as possible the form or "flavor" of the original item.

The purpose of this discussion is to point out reasons why the ECLT and OPI do not seem to be relevant to other measures of Army performance among Puerto Ricans. A fair percentage of those surveyed and interviewed did not feel that the ECLT tested the language skills that they needed to know and use in their Army jobs. As interviewees said,

The comprehension section of the ECLT is not realistic. It repeated a lot and didn't get into more complex aspects. We need a better rating method.

The ECLT? There are two parts, listening and grammar. I know everything about grammar. I can pass perfectly. Listening I can pass. It doesn't mean I know English. We can pass the interviews, it's easy. But it's not enough. The standards are not right.

The language skills officers and enlisted personnel said they needed -- more practice in communication, pronunciation, speaking, being assertive, expressing oneself using

English, writing, Army slang -- do not seem to be the ones upon which English proficiency is currently assessed. This analysis considers the question of why performance on the ECLT does not appear to be related to other measures of success in the Army by considering what language skills it in fact does measure.

The Army has long recognized that the ECLT tests only so-called "passive" language skills (reading and listening), not the "active" skills of speaking and writing.⁷ Use of the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) along with the ECLT is intended to provide a supplementary measure of speaking and comprehension skills. The question therefore becomes, do these tests in fact measure listening, reading, and speaking abilities needed by Army personnel?

The ECLT Listening Comprehension Section

Although the ECLT is supposed to measure "listening comprehension," when the test is examined closely, it appears that it in fact measures but two aspects of language competency that are only superficially and partially related to listening: auditory word discrimination (being able to hear and pick out one word from the rest of a sentence) and vocabulary knowledge.

The following examples illustrate the main focus of the listening comprehension test. The student would hear the question spoken on the tape, then select an answer from four multiple choice options in the test booklet.

- What metal is the tool made with? (metal)
 - a. iron
 - b. wood
 - c. rubber
 - d. plastic

(Answer choices for other items follow similar format.)

- What do you use to see with? (see)

⁷Report of the ASA (M & RA) Hispanic Policy Study Group, 1985.

- Bill is a salesman. What is he? (salesman)
- Maria always leaves for work by eight o'clock. What time does she leave for work? (eight o'clock.)
- She wanted to know how much it costs. What did she want to know? (cost)
- Paul uses a typewriter at work. What does he use? (typewriter)
- Sue left her purse at the restaurant. What did she leave? (purse)
- Why do we call blue a primary color?
 - a. because it is a basic color
 - b. because it is a strong color
 - c. ...
 - d. ...
- Why did the delegates attend the meeting?
 - a. to look nice on stage
 - b. to give presents
 - c. to represent them
 - d. ...

All of the questions on the listening comprehension portion of the test were the same types as those listed above. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of the last two "why" questions (to be discussed later), in each case the structure of the question focuses attention on a single cue word whose comprehension is crucial to answering the question. (These "test" words are indicated in parentheses following each example.) If that one word is missed, proper response to the question cannot be determined. Rather than testing "listening comprehension" these items test the skill of auditory word discrimination, since students are required to discriminate this one word from the context of the sentence in order to answer the question. When talking about the ECLT, interviewees also made this point:

Every exercise has one word. If you catch this word, you can get it.

We need a better rating method. If you miss one word, you're out of luck. There is one cue word in each sentence. It's a different approach to language.

Indeed it is, and a highly unnatural one at that. With the exception of the "why" questions, none of the statement/question combinations represents a common utterance

pattern: e.g., the pattern "X did Y. What did X do?" would rarely occur in natural speech. The unnaturalness of this pattern therefore does not really test students' ability to understand everyday speech. Instead, these items test word discrimination skills.

Moreover, the redundancy and contextual clues present in natural speech -- upon which even native speakers rely for comprehension -- are absent from these utterances. Answering correctly depends instead on accurately hearing the one cue word. Normally, persons listening to speech do **not** listen to hear every word; in fact, they only hear parts of the utterance and cognitively fill in the rest. By forcing students into an unnatural listening pattern focused on single word discrimination, these exercises are therefore very far removed from the domain of real "listening comprehension." They also appear to be stress-inducing, as pointed out by some interviewees, because one has to listen for every single word.

The "Why" questions, as noted, differ in structure from the previous examples. Though they are also intended to test "listening comprehension," they test something else -- in this case, knowledge of vocabulary (and some cultural knowledge as well). The answer choices to the item asking "Why do we call blue a primary color?" (e.g., "because it is a basic color/because it is the strongest color") does not truly distinguish listening comprehension from vocabulary knowledge: that is, it does not distinguish whether a student understood the meaning of the question from whether he knows the reason behind use of the term "primary color."

The other "why" item, "Why did the delegates attend the meeting?" again does not test listening comprehension as much as it tests understanding of the word "delegate," as well as cultural knowledge. The answer to the question in the context of Western diplomacy is obviously based on an understanding of the word "delegate" as a "representative." However, in other cultures (Japanese culture, for example) "looking nice on stage" and "giving presents" are also important functions of delegates. (In Japan, elder persons often "add face" to transactions -- they are just there to lend their presence -- they do not actually participate in proceedings.) Though some testing of cultural knowledge is inevitable in any test situation, use of items with high cultural content ought to be minimized.

Questions on the second section of the listening portion of the exam are again based on auditory discrimination and knowledge of vocabulary -- rather than upon listening comprehension. Items in this section require students to identify the cue word in the spoken sentence, and then find a synonym in the choices printed in the test booklet. For example:

(spoken sentence)

The car had sufficient gas to get there.

- (choices)
- a. It had too much gas...
 - b. It had extra gas....
 - c. It had enough gas...
 - d. It had limited gas....

These items, like those in the previous section, do not discriminate between listening comprehension and knowledge of vocabulary -- in this case, of the word "sufficient."

The third and final section of the listening portion of the test contains "dialogs." There are short, two-sentence exchanges between a man and a woman, followed by a spoken question to which the student must choose an answer. Items in this section take the form:

Male: Where did you put my hat?

Female: It's on the table.

Question: What is on the table?

- a. coins
- b. necklace
- c. headgear
- d. shoes

Also, some items are ambiguous. For example:

Male: Smith made a fortune.

Question: What did Smith make?

- a. a lot of radios
- b. a lot of bills
- c. a lot of cars
- d. a lot of money

Both "bills" and "money" are plausible choices.

In these "dialogs," the primary focus is again on understanding one cue word or phrase, and selecting an appropriate synonym. They are thus fundamentally testing the same word discrimination and vocabulary knowledge skills as all the previous exercises.

A more adequate listening comprehension test would (1) approximate more closely "natural" listening situations in which contextual cues are present, (2) discriminate between knowledge of vocabulary and comprehension skills, (3) avoid confusing listening comprehension with analytical word discrimination, (4) provide a true variety of listening exercises, and (5) avoid ambiguous or misleading questions.

The ECLT Reading Section

Major problems with the reading section are that (1) it does not really test reading in the true text-based sense of the word; (2) test items are not well designed, but have *unannounced changes in format and questions based on cultural/gender-linked knowledge*; and (3) it relies too much upon the same one-word vocabulary focus of the listening section. There are items that test knowledge of grammar structures, word order, and idiomatic expressions -- but these, when put together, do not amount to a test of reading ability.

The following are examples of items from this section.

1. Even my sandwich wasn't enough _____.
 - a. time
 - b. weight
 - c. food

- d. money
- 2. Some people go to parks for amusement.
 - a. communication
 - b. transportation
 - c. entertainment
 - d. examination
- 3. She bought a _____ of panty hose.
 - a. two
 - b. foot
 - c. length
 - d. pair

These items exemplify the problems found in this section. Item 1 is a "fill-in-the-blank" type question that does not test "reading" so much as it tests vocabulary -- i.e., "sandwich" = "food." This item, and nearly all of the others in this section (with the exception of the "paragraph" items at the end of the test) essentially test the same type of vocabulary knowledge as items in the listening section. Being able to identify the meaning of one word is not the same skill as being able to grasp the meaning of a chunk of text: the first is a discrete word-knowledge skill; the second is reading skill.

Item 2 shows a change of format that is unannounced; the student must switch from a fill-in-the-blank question format to a synonym-selection or matching format, and then back again. Further unannounced changes are found later, where a section of questions testing grammatical knowledge is appended, without notice, to the preceding "reading/vocabulary" questions. The most drastic format change then appears at the end (again, it is unmarked) where students are given paragraphs to read.

Item 3 is gender/culture-biased: it tests knowledge that females in Western culture are more likely to know than males. Other examples in which cultural knowledge is implied or assumed, and may affect students' responses to questions are:

- My roommate just injured his leg. I _____ take him to the hospital.
- a. won't

- b. may
- c. would
- d. must

In this item, "won't" "may" and "must" are all grammatically correct, thus making the item ambiguous. "Must" and "may" are both technically correct and plausible. "Must" is culturally correct. It is thus impossible to answer the question without cultural knowledge of what one does when one's roommate has an injury.

This "reading" section also contains items such as the following:

When did she _____ the table?

- a. sit
- b. seat
- c. set
- d. sat

This item does not test "reading;" it tests pronunciation and/or spelling, depending on one's perspective. There is no doubt about the word itself; only the written form is in question. This is also inappropriate in a test of "reading" for ESL students.

The boiling point of water is the degree at which it will become a gas. When does water form into a gas?

- a. at the freezing point
- b. at the point of water
- c. at the boiling point
- d. above the melting mark

Literal repetition of the same words in the given sentence and the answer leads one to wonder indeed what the point of this item is. It certainly does not test "reading."

The final (again unmarked) section of the test represents a better approximation of reading in that it requires students to read paragraphs and then answer questions based on the paragraphs. These items are not just isolated sentences; they create contexts for understanding, and are thus "truer" tests of reading ability.

Summary Remarks. In general, the ECLT does not appear to test those aspects of language performance that lie at the heart of language used in real-life situations. Nearly all the questions on the test, whether comprehension or reading, in fact tap the same mechanical language skill, that of discriminating a single word from its context, and associating meaning with it. This means that the ECLT is primarily a vocabulary test, despite superficial differences in question format. Though language-related, vocabulary knowledge is obviously not sufficient for language performance in real life military situations.

The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)

The OPI has been used by the Army to provide a measure of speaking and comprehension ability to supplement those measures provided by the ECLT. As pointed out in previous chapters of this report, however, scores on the OPI do not seem to correlate with other indicators of success in the Army. The purpose of this analysis is to consider what language skills are tested on the OPI, how they are tested, and whether they relate to the communication skills Puerto Rican personnel say they need for success *in the Army*. Though any test of language ability involves some formalization and hence some distancing from naturalized language use, tests vary in the extent to which they in fact measure the language skills they intend to.

Data (fieldnotes) for this section were obtained during an actual administration of an OPI. Observers spoke with the test administrators before the interview, listened to the proceedings, took notes, and then talked with the student interviewee briefly after the interview. In addition, observers obtained copies of the "Briefing" for students on the OPI, and the criteria for rating student performance. It should be noted that all the comments made in this section are based on observation of only one administration of the OPI. Thus, we discuss here what the OPI is like, but do not generalize about how it is administered.

According to the interviewers, students are informed about what to expect during the interview. They are given a short printed "briefing" that explains how they will be evaluated and what their score means. However, the student we observed either had not been given the briefing, had not read it, or had not understood it, because when he was

given an opportunity to ask a question of the interviewers, he asked how he would be evaluated on the OPI. The briefing was written in rather abstract language (using some linguistic jargon -- e.g., "language tasks") that failed to explain clearly in a fashion comprehensible to a non-native speaker what interviewers would be evaluating. Thus, even if this student had read the briefing, it is still possible he might not have had a good idea as to what interviewers were looking for.

Although this student said he had been nervous during the interview, he conveyed an impression of confidence, and expressed himself readily without hesitation. He had some pronunciation problems (dropped the "s" of the third person singular rather consistently) and failed to use the past tense when required, yet he responded adequately to all questions asked. In particular, he asked interviewers to repeat a question he did not understand, and showed good grasp of various discourse strategies (or what is known in linguistics as "pragmatics" -- the ability to use language to accomplish an aim--to convince, get information, defend a point of view, hypothesize, etc.)

OPI Interview Structure

The interview was highly structured, with the two interviewers taking turns asking the student questions. They had a very professional manner, and spoke clearly, with an even tone and moderate pace. They began by asking him to "tell us something about your background, education." The student spoke about his family, especially about his sister, using the descriptive present; however, he routinely dropped the third person "s" from his verbs. Next, he was asked to describe a past experience; he used the "present": e.g. "I arrive[d] Friday, I check[ed] in I take my ticket" This was followed by a question requiring use of the future: "What will you do this weekend?" The student answered: "Buy something [for] my wife, wash my clothes, probably study I have to wash my clothes."

Other questions followed: "How do you get a driving test in San Juan?" "When did you arrive here?" Then, the interviewers ask the student to take part in some role playing situations: e.g., "At the airport someone claims your suitcase is hers -- what do you say to her? When you're at a restaurant and you're ready to pay the bill, you realize you've left you wallet at home -- what do you do?"

The student was then required to ask a question of the interviewers. At this point he asked how they score the OPI. When the interviewers responded by saying "It's too complicated to get into right now," he asked, "What do you think about the Puerto Ricans? I always get the feeling that people always think bad about the Puerto Ricans." The interviewers also dismissed this question, saying "I'm sure you will find [no bad attitudes] here at DLI." Since his questions were not deemed "appropriate," an interviewer prompted him by saying, "Do you have any questions about us, about our families?" Next, an interviewer read him a paragraph describing a divorce situation, and asked him an opinion question. The final question was intended to be an "hypothetical" case: "Had you the opportunity to be in someone else's shoes in your country, who would you be and why?" The student had trouble understanding this the first time, and asked the interviewer to repeat it. He then answered and defended his choice.

Analysis. Although the interviewers' first questions were obviously designed to elicit use of present, past, and future tense, the student responded normally and adequately to the future tense question without using a future construction such as "I will" or "I am going to." Instead, he omitted the first part of the future construction, something that native speakers often do. In the case of dropping the third person "s" from the present tense, since this is a very common error among Puerto Ricans even though they may have studied English for many years and have high scores on tests such as the ECLT, the error is most likely one of pronunciation or fossilization,⁸ not lack of grammatical knowledge. In the case of the past tense, it was difficult to tell if the errors made were due to lack of grammatical knowledge, improper pronunciation, or fossilization. One weakness of the OPI as an assessment method is its lack of ability to discriminate between various kinds of errors in speech, and the relative "significance" or impact of such errors on fluency.

To some extent the format of the structured interview necessarily makes the interaction between interviewer and interviewee somewhat less than "natural." However, though it may lack some of the basic characteristics of natural communication situations, the structured format OPI could be adapted more closely to match the types of communication situations and needs that military personnel say they face in Army life.

⁸Fossilization refers to that process whereby a language learner's "interlanguage" forms (those erroneous forms that represent the transition from the native language to the target language) become habitual and resistant to further change and development, while other aspects of language may develop normally.

First, in the interview we observed there was no overall focus or context to the questions asked. They were not related to one another, as in normal conversation; they did not force the student to elaborate on one topic through interaction with a respondent in the same sort of intensive way that natural communication does. The overall impression was one of abrupt jumps from one topic to another. A more consistent topic focus could be found, especially one that soldiers might face in their daily lives.

Second, during most of the interview the student was simply responding to questions rather straightforwardly. The types of language tasks he was required to perform did not demand much active production of language -- especially in the sense of **initiating** discourse, actively defending a point of view under attack, or asserting oneself. These are all uses of language that appear to be crucial to success in Army life. To some extent, the role playing situations did require the student to use different discourse strategies such as persuasion or self-assertion, yet these language uses were framed more as hypothetical cases (i.e., "what would you say if . . .") rather than as actual conversational exchanges.

The interviewer's reading a paragraph from a text in order to "test" the student's listening comprehension skill was also problematic, simply because such texts are not meant to be heard, but read. The ability to comprehend "written text" spoken aloud is quite different from the ability to understand natural speech. This is another area in which the OPI departs somewhat from natural language use.

Evaluation Criteria. OPI evaluation criteria focus on six dimensions of language use: pronunciation, fluency, socio-linguistic and cultural knowledge, grammar, vocabulary, and language tasks (e.g., being able to ask questions, make requests, state an opinion, etc.). Each area has six possible evaluation levels, from 0 to 5, with 0 meaning no knowledge of the language, and 5 meaning language skill equivalent to that of a native speaker. These criteria touch on all of the relevant dimensions of language and as such can be regarded as quite comprehensive.

Summary Comments on the OPI. Officially the OPI evaluation criteria consider language pragmatics or "tasks" (that is, what a person can do with the language -- participate in conversations, make requests, argue, etc.), yet it is possible that the

interview itself affords little real opportunity for students to demonstrate how well they can do these things, judging from observations of this one case. During the interview the student was required mainly to answer questions to demonstrate how well he could handle different grammatical structures. Though the questions asked included some "opinion" and "hypothetical" cases, these were not very interactive, nor were they personally involving, because the student was not given a chance to choose the topic.

This is clearly shown by the interviewers' attempts to "control" the topic of discourse when the student was given an opportunity to ask questions. Instead of answering the student's questions about the OPI and Puerto Rico, and leading into a real conversational exchange, they dismissed his questions and suggested he ask them about something else (their families) -- a topic in which he obviously was not interested. This was the only point at which the communication between interviewer and student could have approached naturalness. The motivation and interest that underlie natural speech communication were explicitly undermined at this point and throughout most of the interview.

The second area of weakness of the OPI concerns its inability to distinguish between different sources of students' language weaknesses. So many factors go into language production during the OPI -- including motivation, affect, knowledge (about current events and other topics) -- that it is difficult to say if a student made a chance error, an error of pronunciation, an error of grammar, or simply lacked sufficient knowledge of a given topic or situation. Some errors are certainly more serious than others; yet there is no way to account for these differences in the ratings that students receive.

Students should also be informed of what they are to be evaluated on during the OPI, preferably in a face-to-face "pre-interview" with interviewers or other staff. It was obvious that this student did not know how he was to be evaluated. The paper briefing is not sufficient.

Perhaps the most important weakness, however, stems from the overall lack of military relevance of the OPI. The student is not required to use military language or to demonstrate military knowledge through language, nor is he or she required to meet communication demands of typical military situations. A much more realistic sort of communication "interview" could be set up in which the student is required to use

language appropriate to his or her (probable) rank, job, and role. In order for the OPI to show greater relevance as a measure of communication skills required in Army life, changes in the areas of military content and language tasks would seem necessary.

Chapter 9. Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes the findings of preceding chapters and presents recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from the findings.

Findings and Conclusions

As stated in Chapter 2, the primary purpose of this evaluation was to work toward the development of minimum competency levels on the ECLT and the OPI for non-native English speaking officers and enlisted members. The desired minimum competency levels would be those that acted as a screen, excluding anyone with too little English to succeed, and admitting anyone whose English was sufficient. The scope of activities was to begin establishing a base of information that would support subsequent work in setting *appropriate test score standards*. The two major evaluation questions that guided the study were: (1) What English language ability is needed for success as an officer or enlisted member? and (2) Is English language preparation (screening and instruction) adequate? Findings and conclusions related to these evaluation questions are addressed below.

What English Language Ability is Needed for Success as an Officer or Enlisted Member?

Information from several sources of data show that English proficiency is important for the success of non-native English speaking Army personnel. Especially important for officers and enlisted members are conversational skills; it was believed by those in the evaluation that correct pronunciation was important for both groups, and that English pronunciation was difficult for many non-native English speakers. Many non-native English speakers also indicated that they had problems understanding different American accents and dialects, as well as understanding some of the colloquial English used in the Army. Having adequate writing skills was viewed as critical for officers. Survey and

interview data both showed that officers wanted better preparation in writing the kinds of documents required by the Army, such as OERs, EERs, awards, and other reports.

It should also be noted that knowledge of English and even the ability to speak it were felt by some Army personnel to be insufficient to bring about communication. Other factors that appeared to inhibit some non-native speakers' ability to communicate were a lack of confidence and a fear of being laughed at because of their English. This concern was felt especially by enlisted personnel. Thus, having the confidence to risk speaking English in different situations, especially when doing so might elicit negative reactions, was viewed as important.

Is English Language Preparation (Screening and Instruction) Adequate?

This evaluation question was addressed by examining how English proficiency screening criteria related to available measures of career success in the Army, and by looking at non-native English speakers' and supervisors' assessments of the ECLT and OPI as screening measures.

Cut-off scores on the ECLT and the OPI are used as standards to screen the English proficiency of non-native English speaking officers and enlisted members. The ECLT is the official instrument within the Department of Defense for testing English language ability.

The OPI is an interview used by the Army to measure speaking and listening ability. It is conducted by two qualified Oral Proficiency Interviewers, and takes approximately one hour to administer.

Numerous correlation studies have been conducted comparing the ECLT with other instruments. Among these is a Pearson product-moment correlation that was run between the ECLT and the TOEFL in August 1978, using 104 DLIELC students. The results of this study showed a high correlation of .80 ($PR < .001$) between the two tests.⁹ Another correlation was run with 843 resident DLIELC students in 1978, which indicated a

⁹The results of this study were reported in DLIELC pamphlet 1025.11-M, American language course placement test (ALCPT). (January, 1984).

substantial correlation of .79 between the reading grade equivalent portion of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and the ECLT. The ECLT was also renormed with native English speaking enlisted members in 1980, using a sample of 1235 native English speaking soldiers and 1306 non-native English speaking soldiers. This study showed that soldiers whose first language is English attain an average score of 86.5 on the ECLT.¹⁰ Finally, Chapter 3 of this report discusses the results of an analysis of variance that indicated a moderate relationship between the ECLT and the comprehension portion of the OPI.

While the ECLT correlates with other standardized measures of language proficiency and reading ability, and the comprehension rating on the OPI appears to be moderately related to the ECLT, findings from this evaluation indicate that these tests do not adequately measure all relevant aspects and levels of English proficiency for non-native English speaking Puerto Rican Army personnel. Analyses of available outcome data for officers and enlisted personnel showed that overall, these measures of English proficiency were not significantly related to available indicators of success in the Army.

Evaluation findings showed little relationship between the ECLT, OPI, and available measures of success. For officers, performance on these tests was not a necessary determinant of rank. For enlisted personnel, the ECLT and OPI were less strongly associated with rank than were other performance measures (GT and SQT performance and level of education). The ECLT had a weak positive correlation with GT and SQT performance. Finally, there was a moderate correlation between the ECLT and the OPI; this correlation was largely between the comprehension subtest of the OPI and the ECLT.

Whether Army personnel who had attended DLIELC appeared on PERSINSCOM's records was also used as a crude measure of success. Those who appear on the EMF or OMF are currently on active duty in the Army; those not on these records are not currently active in the Army. The data do show that DLIELC attendees who were later listed on the EMF and the OMF also had better ECLT performance. The ECLT scores of officers listed on the OMF were likely to be about 3 points higher than the scores of those not appearing on the OMF; soldiers not on the EMF tended to enter and exit DLIELC with lower ECLT scores and received lower performance ratings at DLIELC than

¹⁰The results of the latter two studies were reported in correspondence provided by staff at DLIELC/LEACT, entitled Renorming of English comprehension level (ECL) examination. (June, 1980).

those present on the EMF. Enlisted members listed on the EMF were also more likely to have OPI ratings of 1+/1 or better than those not listed. However, meeting the *minimum* standards set on these tests did not generally distinguish those who appeared on the EMF and OMF from those who did not. Some who failed standards set for these tests are now serving as U.S. Army officers and enlisted members; others who met these criteria are not currently active in the Army.

These analyses are supported by interview, observation, and survey data indicating that the officers and enlisted personnel in this study were adequately prepared, but that screening could be improved by focusing on skills that are the most difficult or most important for these non-native English speakers. Also, interviewees familiar with the ECLT felt that it did not sufficiently assess the English skills that non-native speakers needed to know to succeed in the Army. This is not to say that the skills measured by the ECLT are unimportant. Rather, the test does not measure several other abilities (e.g., writing, use of standard pronunciation) that were felt to be crucial.

As mentioned earlier, both groups needed better preparation and screening in speaking and listening skills, and for officers, better preparation and screening in writing skills was also important. Interviewees and survey respondents felt that English preparation could be improved by increasing classroom opportunities to speak the kind of English needed in real life situations, and by placing students in environments in which they used only English and had more contact with native English speaking people. Officers emphasized the importance of instruction in writing military documents. They also felt that preparation could be improved by allowing more people to attend DLIELC, and by having ROTC cadets take more English instruction than is currently required.

Findings also indicate that, while non-native speakers entering the Army should meet minimum standards in the English skills that are important or difficult for them, they would also benefit from opportunities to improve their English skills once they become active in the Army. Interviewees noted that the English of non-native speakers is likely to improve over time spent in the Army, and that opportunities to receive additional English instruction on post could help to bring about this improvement. Interviewees and survey respondents also noted that more "good" soldiers and officers might be retained if both oral and written evaluations could take into account that some non-native English speakers are still acquiring English skills during the early stages of their careers. Finally,

some officers and supervisors in this study noted that the Army had a relatively untapped resource in its Spanish-speaking officers; these Army personnel could be placed in positions that took advantage of their Spanish skills.

Recommendations

Findings from this evaluation lead us to conclude that while current measures of English proficiency may screen for some English skills, they do not sufficiently test the English skills that officers and enlisted members felt were most important or most difficult. Thus, before attempting to answer the question of whether the standards set on the ECLT or the OPI are appropriate, program administrators should first examine what English skills are related to success in the Army, and whether the tests measure these skills. They should also consider whether current English preparation for officers and enlisted members adequately addresses the skills non-native speakers say they need. Specific recommendations for English preparation and screening are discussed below.

English Preparation

1. Officers who had attended ROTC suggested that English preparation could be improved by increasing the amount of English instruction for cadets. Some of these officers had encountered difficulties with English at Basic Camp and Advanced Camp; these experiences were often their first exposures to an English speaking environment. Also, ROTC staff had said that the primary reason for attrition in ROTC in Puerto Rico was a lack of English proficiency. Thus, English instruction should be made widely available to non-native English speaking ROTC cadets, and it should begin as early as possible in their ROTC careers.
2. Classroom instruction in formal English training programs should allow more opportunities for non-native English speaking Army personnel to practice speaking English. Providing more speaking practice does not necessarily mean increasing the number of oral drills and exercises in a class. Since the early 1970's, language teachers and other researchers have recognized that while it is important to consider language in terms of its structure (grammar and

vocabulary), but also in terms of the communicative functions it performs. Students need to manipulate the structure of a new language, but they also need to learn to develop strategies for relating the structures to their communicative functions in real situations and real time. Therefore it is important that students are provided with ample opportunities to use the language themselves for communicative purposes (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 64; Littlewood, p. x, 1981).

Thus, in English language training programs, teachers should allow students to practice *communicating* in English; that is, give them chances to express ideas and opinions, structure practice in conversational English around topics that are of genuine interest to students, and allow students to talk about things they have a *need* to express. The language taught in English programs should also focus on the language that officers and soldiers say they need in their Army lives outside the classroom. This might include more exposure to American accents and dialects that are different from standard English, and colloquial language that is used in the Army. Activities that encourage this kind of communication need not be saved for advanced students. Students in many of the classes we observed demonstrated a readiness to communicate in English before having attained perfect mastery of all grammar structures and vocabulary. Finally, the more chances they have to communicate in English, the more opportunities they will have to work on and correct their pronunciation, an aspect of English cited as a problem for both officers and enlisted personnel.

This more "communicative" approach to language teaching was already being used in some of the classes we observed. Students were encouraged to use English as the *medium* for discussing topics of interest to them, or they were required to give presentations on articles they had read. Because of their highly communicative value, these types of activities should continue to be used in the classroom, at all levels and as frequently as possible.

Finally, we recognize that, according to DLIELC staff, the ALC curriculum is currently being revised to reflect more current communicative methods in language teaching. It is thus possible that some of the changes we recommend here are already taking place or being considered.

3. Non-native English speaking officers should receive more formal instruction in writing the kind of military documents they said they needed to write in the Army. ROTC cadets do receive some writing instruction in their military science classes, and officers take writing courses during BOBC. However, non-native speakers who are learning to both speak and write in English as a second language appear to need writing instruction in addition to that intended primarily for officers and cadets whose first language is English. We were told that the Language Training Detachment in Puerto Rico will begin to offer courses to MS III and MS IV students in writing military documents to supplement military science instruction in writing. We were also told that more writing was recently introduced into the DLIELC curriculum. These writing courses should continue to be offered, and they should reflect the actual writing that officers are required to do. Finally, ROTC writing courses should be made available to a greater number of cadets.
4. Non-native English speakers wanted more opportunities to speak not only in the classroom, but also outside of their classes. English training programs should take place in environments in which students have the opportunity to speak English at all times. Wherever possible, structured activities could be arranged that allow students more contact with native English speakers. At DLIELC, for example, we were told that such activities are arranged for foreign nationals, including meals with English-speaking families, field trips, and so on.
5. Two issues related to language learning which were important to non-native speakers might be addressed more often in formal language training programs. These are: (1) the role of confidence in learning a new language, and (2) cross-cultural issues as they relate to Army life. The problems that non-native English speaking Puerto Ricans might be expected to encounter in these areas could be more widely addressed in English classrooms.

Screening for English Proficiency

As our findings suggest that current tests do not discriminate between "successful" and "unsuccessful" non-native speaking Army personnel, it does not seem appropriate at

this time to discuss what the minimum standards should be on these tests. It would be more appropriate to discuss what measures best assess students' proficiency in the English skills needed in their jobs, namely conversational skills, and, for officers, writing skills.

As discussed above, evaluation findings show that the ECLT or the OPI are not absolute determinants of any of the indicators of success that we examined, namely rank; presence on the EMF or OMF; and for soldiers, GT and SQT performance. The ECLT may be successful at screening for certain English skills, such as knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, but this is not sufficient; it does not appear to assess those skills that Army personnel generally said they found difficult or that they needed. (Admittedly, these interviewees would be likely to cite skills in which they had weaknesses rather than those in which they were proficient.) While the OPI did not correlate with available indicators of success, it does test students' conversational English, one of the language skills that Army personnel said they needed. The OPI might serve as a better screening device, however, if it required students to listen to and use more of the language that they might need in real life military situations. The ECLT could also screen Army personnel better if its listening comprehension section, which comprises almost two-thirds of the test, required students to listen to natural conversation (the way native speakers do). As discussed in Chapter 8, the context and 'redundancy' inherent in natural speech allow us to derive meaning from a conversation without having to process every single word in the conversation. The listening comprehension items on the ECLT could better reflect what actually takes place during the comprehension of natural speech if they allowed students to make sense of longer 'chunks' of conversation that provide this context and redundancy. The ECLT could also have more relevance for students if it included conversations from Army contexts. Finally, neither test assesses proficiency in the writing skills officers said they needed, so a writing component could be added to the screening process for officers.

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Appendix A

Data Elements Used in Evaluation From EMF, OMF, DLIELC

**ESL DATA ELEMENTS
ENLISTED MEMBERS AND OFFICERS
17 MAY 1988**

Enlisted Members

Elements From Enlisted Master File (EMF)

<u>Abbrev</u>	<u>Comments</u>
SSN	Social Security Number
PDB-RSI	Active-inactive indicator
CIVED	Academic education level
PMOS-ENLD	Primary MOS
AFQT-PCTL	AFQT Pct Score
APSCR*	Auditory Perception Test Standard Score
CLSCR*	Clerical Aptitude
COSCR*	Combat Aptitude
MMSCR*	Motor Mechanic Aptitude
OFSCR*	Food Operations Aptitude
STSCR*	Skilled Technician Aptitude
ELSCR*	Battery Electronics Aptitude
FASCR*	Battery Field Artillery Aptitude
GMSCR*	General Maintenance Aptitude
GTSCR*	General Technical
CON-LANG	Control language identification
DMOSD-ENLD	Duty MOS
ETH-GRP	Ethnic Group
PAY-LEVEL-SER-N	Pay grade
SQT-PCTL-SCORE-PMOS	PMOS percentile score

<u>Abbrev</u>	<u>Comments</u>
SQT-RAW-SCORE-PMOS	PMOS score
REENL-ELIG-RA	Eligibility for reentry reg Army
SMOSD-ENL	Secondary MOS
SQT-RAW-SCORE-SMOS	SMOS score
SEX	Gender

Elements From DLI Enlisted Members

NAME	This has Social Security Number in it
GRADE	Rank
COMPONENT	Active/Reserve/Guard
ENTRY DT	Date of entry
GRAD DT	Date of graduation
STATUS-CODE	Reason for attrition
ASSG	Assignment
ATT	Attitude
CLP	Class performance
COM	Comprehension
MOT	Motivation
RDL	Reading Level
SPL	Speaking
WRL	Writing
PRG	Progress
BK-ADV	Book advance
ECLSCORE	Last ECL score listed

Officers Data Base

Elements From OMF

<u>Abbrev</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Abbrev</u>	<u>Comments</u>
SSN	Social security number	STATUS-CODE	Reasons for attrition from DLI
TGRA	Temporary grade abbreviation	ASG	Assignments
COMPT	Active/Reserve/Guard	ATT	Attitude
OPP	Officer promotion potential	CLP	Class performance
OPPDATE	Date OPP rating	COM	Comprehension
DCCMF	Commissioned career mgt field	MOT	Motivation
DSCMF	Secondary career mgt field	RDL	Reading
MEL	Military ed level	SPL	Speaking
SEX	Gender	WRL	Writing
RLL	Linguist area; first lang identity	PRG	Progress
RLL	Second language	BK-ADV	Book advance
RLL	Third	ECL	ECL test score
RLL	Fourth . . .		
SKILLS	(repeating grp, 1st-6th, 2AN each)		
PROMT	(repeating grp, 6 each) commiss date		
CELC	Civilian ed level		
RCEAS	Civilian ed specialty		

Elements From DLI Officer's Tape

SSN	Within these columns, with name
GRADE	Rank
ENTRYDT	Date entered DLI
GRADDT	Date graduated DLI

Appendix B
Instruments for ESL Evaluation



OBC & FD - O
Language Activity Rating
1/25/88

U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

The attached data collection form is for use by the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) and its contractor, The American Institutes for Research (AIR), in their efforts to study the English - as - a - Second Language (ESL) programs for officers. We are using this form to assess officer's performance on selected English Communication tasks identified in the Military Qualification Standards (MQS) II Manual of Common Tasks.

Language Activity Rating for Officers Branch Officer Basic Course (BOBC) and First Duty Assignment

Data required by the Privacy Act of 1974:

PRESCRIBING DIRECTIVE: AR 70-1
AUTHORITY: 10 USC SEC 4503

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE(S):

The data collected with the attached form are to be used for research.

ROUTINE USES:

This is an experimental personnel data collection form developed by the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences pursuant to its research mission as prescribed in AR 70-1. When identifiers (name or Social Security Number) are requested they are to be used for administrative and statistical control purposes only. Full confidentiality of the responses will be maintained in the processing of these data.

MANDATORY OR VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE AND EFFECT ON INDIVIDUAL NOT PROVIDING INFORMATION:

Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. Individuals are encouraged to provide complete and accurate information in the interests of the research, but there will be no effect on individuals for not providing all or any part of the information. This notice may be detached from the rest of the form and retained by the individual if so desired.

Date _____ (day/mo/yr) Your Name _____ (last name) _____ (first name)

Name of officer you are rating _____ (last name) _____ (first name) Your relationship to the officer you are rating _____

Officer's branch _____ How many months have you known this officer? _____

Officer's branch specialty _____ How much opportunity have you had to observe this officer at work? (check one)

Officer is currently at (check one):

_____ BOBC _____ almost daily

_____ Permanent Party _____ several times a week

_____ Other (write in) _____ _____ several times a month

_____ _____ rarely or never

Instructions

Below is a list of common tasks that require officers to use English communication skills. Each task appears under the English communication skill that is primarily involved in performing the task - speaking and understanding spoken English, reading and writing English, and reading English. Officers might only be required to perform some of the tasks listed here as part of their regular duties. However, all officers must perform most of these tasks at least once a year during their field training exercises (FTX).

Please look at each task listed below. If you have had an opportunity to observe the officer perform that task, either as part of that officer's regular duties or during FTX, please rate the officer on how well he or she performs the task as compared with all officers of equal rank and experience that you supervise. Please circle the number that applies to the appropriate rating. If you have never observed the officer perform the task, or if the officer is not required to perform the task, please circle the "0" under "Don't know or does not apply."

General common tasks	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
Speaking and understanding spoken English					
1. Conducts briefings	4	3	2	1	0
2. Counsels subordinates (i.e., provides both formal and informal counseling)	4	3	2	1	0
3. Manages subordinates	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
10. Prepares platoon to meet a renewed attack (i.e., reestablishes local security, improves fighting position, reestablishes communications, replaces obstacles, repositions fighting and weapons positions, and implements sleep/alert plans)	4	3	2	1	0
When conducting a reconnaissance patrol					
11. Applies the fundamentals of planning for a reconnaissance patrol, based on information from maps, photos, reconnaissance reports, and other intelligence provided (i.e., plans for the establishment of the objective rally point (ORP), the conduct of the leader's reconnaissance, the recon of the objective, dissemination of information, and actions on enemy contact, gains all required information)	4	3	2	1	0
12. Avoids detection by enemy and employs strict security measures	4	3	2	1	0
13. Conducts area and zone reconnaissance	4	3	2	1	0
14. Withdraws from an objective and exchanges information as the situation permits	4	3	2	1	0
When reporting information of potential intelligence value					
15. If sending message by messenger, provides messenger with explicit reporting instructions	4	3	2	1	0
16. If sending message by radio, uses proper radio/telephone procedures according to unit SOP and FM 24-1.	4	3	2	1	0
17. Sends message by wire	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
Reading English					
4. Reads and understands technical manuals (TMs) and field manuals (FMs)	4	3	2	1	0
5. Conducts basic maintenance in accordance with written instructions	4	3	2	1	0
Specific common tasks					
Speaking and understanding spoken English					
When supervising construction of obstacles					
6. Ensures that the work force has sufficient food and rest, that fuel supplies are adequate, and that they have the capability to maintain and repair equipment	4	3	2	1	0
When organizing/conducting a platoon-size element defense day/night					
7. Occupies defensive position (i.e., conducts a recon of the position prior to occupying the position and finalizes the defensive plan)	4	3	2	1	0
8. Conducts the defense (i.e., controls and directs fire, calls for and adjusts supporting fire, moves men within platoon position, provides more ammunition and equipment as needed)	4	3	2	1	0
When consolidating and reorganizing a platoon following enemy contact					
9. Reorganizes and restores order within unit to prepare for further combat (i.e., evacuates casualties, restores communications, redistributes supplies, ensures that all key weapons are manned)	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
18. If officer encounters jamming or interference, transmits a message, intrusion, jamming, and interference (MIJI) report by messenger, wire, or radio to net control station.	4	1	2	1	0
19. Coordinates with higher headquarters	4	3	2	1	0
When preparing/escorting movement plans					
20. Conducts a convoy briefing	4	3	2	1	0
When describing nuclear weapons effects					
21. Describes nuclear blast effect, thermal, radiation, and psychological effects, and the Electromagnetic pulse (EMP) of a nuclear detonation	4	3	2	1	0
When supervising unit response to a chemical or biological attack					
22. Supervises the protection of personnel	4	3	2	1	0
23. Finds MOPP guidance (i.e., sees the OPORD or asks the commander)	4	3	2	1	0
24. Directs personnel to assume required MOPP level, checks key personnel for proper wearing of the CB protective ensemble and has personnel check each other using the buddy system; reduces stress and fatigue by rotating jobs requiring heavy work among subordinate units and individuals, allowing longer and more frequent rest periods, providing adequate water so that personnel can increase their water intake, using vehicular transportation whenever possible, and making maximum use of machinery and other mechanical aids	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
25. Reports the attack with a FLASH precedence, using the NBC 1 message format	4	3	2	1	0
26. Supervises casualty treatment	4	3	2	1	0
27. Directs efforts to reduce further contamination	4	3	2	1	0
28. Supervises improvements of current field positions	4	3	2	1	0
When supervising unit response to nuclear attack and/or radiological hazard					
29. Initiates individual or unit protective actions required before a nuclear detonation, supervises unit radiological monitoring operations, controls radiation exposure, and performs required radiological decontamination procedures	4	3	2	1	0
When conducting collective training					
30. Gathers training resources to conduct collective training	4	3	2	1	0
31. Identifies and conducts individual and leader training that support collective tasks and conducts collective training using the applicable steps of the training outline	4	3	2	1	0
32. Conducts an after action review (AAR)	4	3	2	1	0
33. Uses the drill progression found in FM 25-3 when conducting training on drills	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
When conducting a platoon level after action review (AAR)					
34. Reviews training objectives with squad leaders and their squads and discusses the training events	4	3	2	1	0
35. Reviews the training event with the entire platoon (i.e., guides the discussion by asking leading questions, ensures that the discussion does not embarrass leaders or soldiers but emphasizes the positive aspects of the event, has participants describe what happened in their own words, asks thought-provoking questions to stimulate discussion, discusses alternate and more effective courses of action, and examines the reasons for inappropriate actions that were taken and the alternatives that were available)	4	3	2	1	0
When conducting individual training					
36. Conducts training procedures using the LA W Five-P model	4	3	2	1	0
When supervising unit maintenance operations					
37. Determines the effectiveness of key maintenance personnel to perform their functions and responsibilities	4	3	2	1	0
38. Inspects repair actions, safety procedures, and facilities	4	3	2	1	0
39. Inspects unit recovery operations	4	3	2	1	0
40. Ensures that unit tactical communications equipment is properly maintained and PMCS are conducted on antennas, AM/FM voice radios, switchboards, tactical telephones, wire and cable sets	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
When supervising recovery operations					
41. Identifies the mission requirements	4	3	2	1	0
When conducting Electronic counter-countermeasures (ECCM)					
42. Checks platoon communications systems for alternate route capability and ensures that authentication systems are being employed	4	3	2	1	0
43. Ensures that ECCM technique training has been accomplished (i.e., ensures that all personnel know how to use the CEOI, brevity lists and preplanned code words; ensures that operators are trained to recognize ECM, fill out and submit MIII reports, minimize transmissions, protect transmissions from enemy interception, practice good radiotelephone operator procedures, and to recognize and overcome jamming/interference)	4	3	2	1	0
When authorizing searches, inspections, and inventories					
44. Grants the authorization to search or refers the case to the commander or individual authority who has the right to authorize a search	4	3	2	1	0
45. Gathers as many facts as possible, consults with JAGC unit legal advisor, lawfully apprehends the apprehendee, conducts, or directs subordinates to conduct search	4	3	2	1	0
46. Authorizes a search based on consent	4	3	2	1	0
47. Carries out the inspection or orders subordinates to carry out the inspection	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
When writing a counseling statement					
48. Conducts counseling session with the soldier, and provides opportunity for soldier to make a statement in item 11 of the counseling statement	4	3	2	1	0
When preparing an Officer Evaluation Report (OER) Support Form					
49. Discusses duties and responsibilities with the rater	4	3	2	1	0
When writing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)					
50. Asks job incumbents what procedures they are currently using to perform tasks, and takes notes from what job incumbents say	4	3	2	1	0
Reading and writing English					
When organizing/conducting a platoon-size element defense day/night)					
51. Develops a defense plan	4	3	2	1	0
52. Develops a sector sketch	4	3	2	1	0
When consolidating and reorganizing a platoon following enemy contact					
53. Ensures that all enemy prisoners of war (EPW), enemy material, and all information are collected and tagged, reported, and evacuated (if possible)	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
When reporting information of potential intelligence value					
54. Drafts message summarizing information in SALUT format or other appropriate format, in accordance with FM 7-7	4	3	2	1	0
When preparing/executing movement plans					
55. Designates equipment and supplies into categories and marks as needed, identifies oversize and overweight equipment and hazardous cargo, and gets special clearance for movement	4	3	2	1	0
56. Prepares and maintains appropriate forms (i.e., DA Form 2940-R, Unit Loading Equipment and Checklist, DA Form 2941-R, Unit Vehicle Loading plan, FORSCOM Form 285-R, Unit Vehicle Load Card, and DA Form 2942-R, Unit Train Loading Plan)	4	3	2	1	0
57. Assembles available equipment and supplies and tests the load plans	4	3	2	1	0
58. Makes adjustments to load plans as necessary based on the tests conducted	4	3	2	1	0
59. Marks convoy vehicles appropriately	4	3	2	1	0
When supervising unit response to a chemical or biological attack					
60. Marks contaminated areas with standard NATO chemical or biological markers	4	3	2	1	0
When supervising unit response to nuclear attack and/or radiological hazard					
61. Operates within operation exposure guidance (OEG)	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
62. Prepares an NBC I nuclear report	4	3	2	1	0
When establishing priorities and getting resources for training tasks					
63. Reviews ARTEP and other critical missions or tasks	4	3	2	1	0
64. Selects at least two collective tasks from the ARTEP or other critical missions or tasks, lists at least 10 individual and 5 leader tasks that support the collective tasks, and establishes a priority for the tasks	4	3	2	1	0
65. Lists resources needed to train personnel on tasks that have priority	4	3	2	1	0
When conducting a platoon level after action review (AAR)					
66. Develops a discussion outline from the appropriate ARTEP publication and any notes made during the evaluation	4	3	2	1	0
When conducting individual training					
67. Lists and establishes priorities for critical tasks to be trained	4	3	2	1	0
When authorizing searches, inspections, and inventories					
68. Writes down detailed circumstances surrounding the apprehension and search	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
When writing an Enlisted Evaluation Report (EER)					
69. Verifies that the information in part I is correct, drafts part II (description of duties), part III (Evaluation of the soldier), and part IV (Evaluation of soldier's potential), and enters his or her name, SSN, rank, organization, and duty assignment	4	3	2	1	0
When reviewing an Enlisted Evaluation Report (EER)					
70. Checks the current rating scheme for the rated soldier to ensure that the proper rater and indorser have completed the report, examines the evaluations of the rater and indorser to clarify or resolve discrepancies or inconsistencies, ensures that the rated soldier has signed report, checks the Summary Score and Special Reports, and reviews the entire EER to ensure that it is in accordance with AR 623-705; enters his or her name, rank, SSN, organization, and duty assignment, and signs and dates the EER	4	3	2	1	0
When writing a counseling statement					
71. Drafts a counseling statement; files the document in the soldier's unit record	4	3	2	1	0
When preparing an Officer Evaluation Report (OER) Support Form					
72. Verifies that the information in parts I and II is correct, drafts Part IVa and IVb (states his or her significant duties and responsibilities and indicates major performance objectives), and creates a final Support Form and reviews the final form for completeness	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
When initiating a Recommendation for an Award					
73. Completes recommendation and signs (or gets appropriate signature)	4	3	2	1	0
When writing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)					
74. Reads the regulations that have a bearing on the problem, drafts SOP and checks it to ensure that it conforms to regulatory guidance, distributes SOP to members of the work force for comments, and modifies the SOP in response to comments received	4	3	2	1	0
When writing a Narrative for a Report					
75. Examines information in the Report of Survey he or she has received, paying attention to date and circumstances, and studies all evidence and statements attached to the report, follows procedures set up in FM 10-14-3 to conduct a Report of Survey; drafts, dates and signs report, and sends all copies of the report to the appointing authority	4	3	2	1	0
Reading English					
When using a map overlay					
76. Locates grid intersections on the map that correspond to the grid register marks on the overlay and identifies (by coordinates or terrain features) map locations that correspond to graphic information	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most officers	As well as most officers	Not as well as most officers	Performs inadequately	Not observed or does not apply
When reporting information of potential intelligence value					
77. Identifies information concerning enemy activity and significant terrain and weather features	4	3	2	1	0
When navigating using a map and compass					
78. Determines the grid coordinates of a point on a military map using the military grid reference system (grid coordinate scale and protractor), measures distance on a map, navigates from start point to finish point using a compass, and measures distance using pace count	4	3	2	1	0
When supervising unit maintenance operations					
79. Ensures that all maintenance publications are on hand and used properly	4	3	2	1	0
80. Ensures that required tools are either on hand or on a valid requisition order	4	3	2	1	0
81. Ensures that the Army Oil Analysis Program (AOAP) is being conducted properly	4	3	2	1	0
82. Inspects TAMMS Records for accuracy and correct procedures (DD Form 314, Preventative Maintenance Schedule and Record, DA Form 2404, Equipment Inspection and Maintenance Worksheet, and DA Form 2407, Maintenance Request)	4	3	2	1	0
83. Inspects Preventive Maintenance Check Procedure (PMCS)	4	3	2	1	0

U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences



The attached data collection form is for use by the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) and its contractor, The American Institutes for Research (AIR), in their efforts to study the English - as - a - Second Language (ESL) programs. We are using this form to assess the performance of enlisted personnel on selected English Communication tasks identified in the Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks, skill levels I and II.

Language Activity Rating for Enlisted Personnel Current Duty Assignment

Data required by the Privacy Act of 1974:

PRESCRIBING DIRECTIVE: AR 70-1
AUTHORITY: 10 USC SEC 4503

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE(S):

The data collected with the attached form are to be used for research.

ROUTINE USES:

This is an experimental personnel data collection form developed by the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences pursuant to its research mission as prescribed in AR 70-1. When identifiers (name or Social Security Number) are requested they are to be used for administrative and statistical control purposes only. Full confidentiality of the responses will be maintained in the processing of these data.

MANDATORY OR VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE AND EFFECT ON INDIVIDUAL NOT PROVIDING INFORMATION:

Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. Individuals are encouraged to provide complete and accurate information in the interests of the research, but there will be no effect on individuals for not providing all or any part of the information. This notice may be detached from the rest of the form and retained by the individual if so desired.

FD-E

Language Activity Rating

SSN: _____

Date _____ Army Post _____
(day/month/yr)

Your Name _____

Your relationship to the soldier
(check one):

- 1st line supervisor
- 2nd line supervisor
- Other (write in) _____

Soldier is currently at (check one):

- BT
- ALT
- Permanent Party
- Other (write in) _____

How many months have you known this
soldier? _____

- How much opportunity have you had to observe this
soldier at work? (check one)
- almost daily
 - several times a week
 - several times a month
 - rarely or never

Instructions

The Department of the Army has asked us at American Institutes for Research in Washington, D.C. to evaluate English - as - a - Second Language training for non-native English speakers in the Army. We would like to know how well non-native English speakers perform on various job tasks that involve using English.

The language activities we list below are those we identified in the Soldiers' Manual of Common Tasks. Skill levels I and II. Please rate this soldier by comparing him or her with all other soldiers (both native and non-native English speakers) of equal rank and experience. Check the response which best fits your knowledge of his or her performance. Please circle the number that applies to the appropriate rating. If you are not familiar with the soldier's performance, please circle the "0" under the "Don't know" option. Thank you for your assistance.

Oral Communication Speech Characteristics	Better than most soldiers		As well as most soldiers		Not as well as most soldiers		Don't know or does not apply	
	4	3	2	1	0	0	0	
1. Speaks in a clear voice (e.g., while warning, using challenges, asking casualty evaluation questions)	4	3	2	1	0			
2. Speaks at a volume appropriate for situation (e.g., while warning, using challenges)	4	3	2	1	0			
3. Uses proper pronunciation (e.g., while sending radio messages)	4	3	2	1	0			
4. Overall speech quality	4	3	2	1	0			

	Better than most soldiers	As well as most soldiers	Not as well as most soldiers	Performs inadequately	Don't know or does not apply
Responding to Commands, Orders, Questions					
12. Clarifies unclear orders by repeating what he or she believes to be the correct order	4	3	2	1	0
13. States disagreement with order if necessary (i.e., if act is perceived to be criminal or illegal)	4	3	2	1	0
14. Understands supervisor's commands, orders, or instructions	4	3	2	1	0
15. Understands job-content related questions and instructions	4	3	2	1	0
Issuing and Responding to Warnings					
16. Warns or informs nearby personnel of danger (e.g., incoming fire, grenade misfire, safety hazards, possible CBN contamination, chemical detection unit tests)	4	3	2	1	0
17. Understands and reacts appropriately to warnings issued by others	4	3	2	1	0
Reading					
18. Reads warnings, markings, or indicators printed on weapons or other items used to carry out job tasks (e.g., "caution," "front toward enemy," "with coupler")	4	3	2	1	0
19. Reads and understands field and training manuals when necessary (e.g., when troubleshooting or preparing for training)	4	3	2	1	0
20. Reads words on scales or gauges	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most soldiers	As well as most soldiers	Not as well as most soldiers	Performs inadequately	Don't know or does not apply
Giving Explanations					
5. Explains or justifies a choice if asked to do so by supervisor (e.g., justifies the selection of a particular route in traversing enemy terrain, why particular actions may be illegal, why certain military actions cannot be accomplished because of defective weapons or materials)	4	3	2	1	0
6. Explains how to perform a task to a supervisor (e.g., how to engage small aircraft, what to look for in checking a sleeping soldier, how to search and scan)	4	3	2	1	0
7. Explains an hypothetical course of action—i.e., what he or she would do given certain circumstances (e.g., if contaminated by Chemical/Biological/Nuclear (CBN) agents)	4	3	2	1	0
8. Explains in a logical, clear, consistent, and forthright manner	4	3	2	1	0
Reporting to Supervisor					
9. Reports problems or malfunctions of materials to appropriate personnel (e.g., malfunctions in rifles, grenades, chemical decontamination materials, masks)	4	3	2	1	0
10. Reports on-duty observations to proper personnel (e.g., indirect fire, field warnings, casualty/injury, readings on radiation dosimeter, results of tests for CBN contamination)	4	3	2	1	0
11. Reports completion of job tasks and readiness to begin another task	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most soldiers	As well as most soldiers	Not as well as most soldiers	Performs inadequately	Don't know or does not apply
21. Identifies needed information in tables or charts	4	3	2	1	0
22. Reads posted notices, warnings, and bulletins	4	3	2	1	0
Writing					
23. Fills out forms (e.g., range cards)	4	3	2	1	0
24. Marks equipment or areas with appropriate labels (e.g., marker for CBN contaminated area)	4	3	2	1	0
25. Writes descriptive reports of on-duty observations	4	3	2	1	0
Supervising Others (skill level II tasks)					
26. Assigns tasks (e.g., when supervising maintenance of equipment)	4	3	2	1	0
27. Requests needed assistance or information (e.g., when preparing training session)	4	3	2	1	0
28. Gives orders or commands (e.g., when telling soldiers how to carry out tasks)	4	3	2	1	0
29. Briefs soldiers (e.g., before training session)	4	3	2	1	0
30. Makes evaluations and corrections (e.g., when supervising construction of a fighting position)	4	3	2	1	0

	Better than most soldiers	As well as most soldiers	Not as well as most soldiers	Performs inadequately	Don't know or does not apply
General Communicative Competence					
31. Communicates with fellow soldiers on the job or in training (e.g., with buddy during training)	4	3	2	1	0
32. Asks questions for information or clarification when necessary	4	3	2	1	0
33. Identifies materials or objects used on the job (e.g., types of grenades, types of tanks, machine parts)	4	3	2	1	0
34. Engages in job-task related conversation when appropriate	4	3	2	1	0
35. Makes requests when necessary according to protocol	4	3	2	1	0
36. Is understood by others	4	3	2	1	0
37. Expresses knowledge, beliefs, and opinions when necessary	4	3	2	1	0
38. Communicates with supervisor (reports problems, discusses issues of concern)	4	3	2	1	0
39. Follows written instructions accurately	4	3	2	1	0
40. Follows oral instructions accurately	4	3	2	1	0

U.S. Army Research Institute for the
Behavioral and Social Sciences

This data collection form is for use by the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) and its contractor, the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

Overall Job Performance and Communicative Competence

English Language Preparation:
Officer's Survey

	Better than most soldiers	As well as most soldiers	Not as well as most soldiers	Performs inadequately	Don't know or does not apply
41. Please rate this soldier's overall job performance	4	3	2	1	0
a. compared to other non-native English speakers:					
b. compared to other native English speakers:	4		2	1	0
42. Please rate this soldier's language competence:					
a. What language does this soldier speak most often while on duty?	4	3	2	1	0
b. How well does he or she speak English compared to all other non-native English speakers?	4	3	2	1	0
c. How well does he or she speak English compared to all other native English speakers?	4	3	2	1	0

Data required by the Privacy Act of 1974:
PRESCRIBING DIRECTIVE: AR 70-1
AUTHORITY: 10 USC SEC 450J

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE(S):

The data collected with the attached form are to be used for research.

ROUTINE USES:

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MANDATORY OR VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE AND EFFECT ON INDIVIDUAL:
NOT PROVIDING INFORMATION:

Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. Individuals are encouraged to provide complete and accurate information in the interests of the research, but there will be no effect on individuals for not providing all or any part of the information. You may copy and retain this statement.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PREPARATION: OFFICER'S SURVEY

Introduction

This survey is concerned with the Army's assessment of the English language abilities of 1000 non-native English speaking officers. The survey also examines the opportunities to learn English that such officers are provided. It is part of an evaluation of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs that is being conducted for the Army Research Institute. The purpose of the study is to ensure that the English instruction needs of non-native English speaking officers are identified and met in an efficient and effective manner.

You were selected for this survey from a list of officers who went on active duty in Puerto Rico during the past five years. Your responses to this questionnaire will be anonymous. The information you provide, however, will be of direct assistance to the Army and to non-native English speaking officers in the future.

DIRECTIONS

Please answer each question that follows. Completed questionnaires should be mailed no later than June 29. Fold the questionnaire so that the return address and stamp show, then staple or tape it closed.

Background Information

1. Did you ever live in the United States or another English-speaking country before joining the Army?

___ No

___ Yes

If "yes," for how long? ___ years and ___ months

2. What do you consider to be your primary language?

___ Spanish

___ English

___ No single language; equally comfortable with Spanish and English

___ Other (what?) _____

3. Are you currently ac:

___ BOBC

___ Permanent Party

___ Other status (what?) _____

4. How many years of active duty experience do you have in the Army? (Round off to whole numbers.)

___ Years as an officer

___ Years as an enlisted member

5. What is your current rank?

___ 1st Lieutenant

___ 2nd Lieutenant

___ Captain

___ Major

___ Other (what?) _____

6. Are you currently:

___ Regular Army active duty

___ Reserve active duty

___ Other (what?) _____

Army English Language Preparation

7. Did you attend ROTC?

___ No

___ Yes

If "yes," for how many years? _____ (Round off)

In what country? _____

8. Did you attend the Defense Language Institute (DLI) at Lackland Air Force Base?

___ No

___ Yes

If "yes," in what year? _____

For how many weeks? _____

9. Did you request assignment to DLI?

___ No

___ Yes

10. How fluent was your English when you received your commission/assignment as an officer?

___ Very well prepared; no problems at all

___ Adequately prepared; no serious problems

___ Minimally prepared; I had to work hard

___ Not prepared; English problems kept me from succeeding

Sources of Preparation and Screening

11. Please circle the number that best describes how much English you learned through each of the following ways. Circle the "NA" if you were never in a situation or if it does not apply because you already knew English.

Lot	Sums	Little	None	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
Grew up in English-speaking surroundings				
3	2	1	0	NA
Elementary and secondary school				
3	2	1	0	NA
College or university classes other than ROTC				
3	2	1	0	NA
ROTC classes in college				
3	2	1	0	NA
Books, movies, television, talking with friends before I came to the US				
3	2	1	0	NA
Living in the US as an adult when I was not in the Army				
3	2	1	0	NA
Defense Language Institute				
3	2	1	0	NA
In the Army—training, in my job, from my spouse or friends				

12. Check any point at which the Army tested your mastery of English. You may check more than one.

___ At the MEPS

___ During ROTC

___ During BOBC

___ At DLI

___ I never took a test of English

___ Other (what?) _____

13. The ECL (English Comprehension Level) Test is a paper-and-pencil test that includes listening to tape-recorded questions. It is used by the Army in ROTC, at MEPS, and at DLI. If you never took the ECL Test, go on to the next question.

How would you rate the usefulness of the ECL Test?

___ Just right; it accurately measures the English needed for Army life.

___ Too hard; it sets a standard that is higher than it needs to be.

___ Too easy; the standard needs to be raised.

___ The ECL Test does not measure the English skills needed.

___ Other (what?) _____

14. The OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) Test is an interview during which you talk with two test administrators, and they evaluate your English comprehension and speaking. Scores are given in terms such as "1-1/2" or "2-1/2." If you never took the OPI, go on to the next question.

How would you rate the usefulness of the OPI?

___ Just right; it accurately measures the English needed for Army life.

___ Too hard; it sets a standard that is higher than it needs to be.

___ Too easy; the standard needs to be raised.

___ The OPI does not measure the English skills needed.

___ Other (what?) _____

15. In general, how well does the Army screen the English ability of non-native English-speaking officers before their first duty assignment?

___ Very well; it lets in all who have enough English to succeed.

___ Too harshly; it excludes candidates who could succeed.

___ Too lax; it admits those who cannot succeed.

___ Other (what?) _____

English Requirements and Abilities

16. Did you have problems with English at different points in your military career? Rate each situation. Circle "NA" if the situation does not apply.

How many problems?

Many Sums Easy None NA

3 2 1 0 NA In college ROTC classes

3 2 1 0 NA In ROTC Advanced Camp

3 2 1 0 NA As an enlisted member

3 2 1 0 NA In Branch Officer Basic Camp

3 2 1 0 NA On my first duty assignment

3 2 1 0 NA Now, dealing with subordinates

3 2 1 0 NA Now, dealing with superiors

3 2 1 0 NA In my future career

Please turn to back

17. Do you have any difficulties with the following English language skills in your role as an officer? Circle "NA" if the skill does not apply to your duties.

How many problems?

Major	Some	Ess	None	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA
3	2	1	0	NA

18. Please share any additional comments or suggestions about how the Army could better screen officer candidates to ensure that they begin their careers with adequate English.

19. Please share any suggestions about how the Army could better prepare non-native English speaking officers.

20. Finally, if you have any further ideas or suggestions that could improve the Army's recruitment and retention of qualified non-native English-speaking officers, please share them here.

Interview Protocol for Officers (ESL)

General experiences

- Tell me about your experiences learning English (where, when):
 - formal schooling (elementary, high school, university, school, DLIELC, tutors)
 - informal experiences (social or work environment)
- Was it easy or difficult for you to learn English? Why? Any experience learning English that was particularly valuable/helpful? Why?
- Why did you join the Army?

Experiences at ROTC

- How much ROTC did you have in college?
 - years, basic and advanced camp, summer school English?
- Tell me about your experiences learning English in ROTC:
 - formal instruction (classes - instructors, materials, etc.)
 - informal opportunities to learn or practice English (Basic or Advanced Camp, etc.)

Experiences at DLIELC (if officer went)

- Tell us about your experiences learning English at DLIELC.
 - English classes (instructors, materials, conditions, etc.)
 - Informal opportunities to learn or practice English outside of the classroom?
 - Help with anything other than your English (adjustment to military, U.S. culture, etc.)?
 - Is it what you expected?
- How much did it help to improve your English? In what areas? What were effective approaches for you and where could instruction/conditions have improved? Do you feel you needed to attend DLIELC? Do you feel that the criteria (ECLT, CS ratings) that qualified you for DLIELC/BOBC were accurate? Do you think that you could use more time at DLIELC or in some other program to improve your English?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

BOBC and present experiences

- How adequate were your English language skills for the kinds of things you had to do in BOBC? Which English skills were most needed there? Did your English ability improve at BOBC?
- How do you feel about your current job (like/dislike? Why?)
- How much English do you need to use on your job? Are your English skills sufficient for your current duties? Which skills are most important?
- How important is facility in English to you personally, to your career as an officer? Are you doing anything to improve your English?
- What makes a "good" officer? What factor is most important?
- What are your plans for the future? [stay in Army (active/non-active duty), leave Army for civilian job, etc.]
- From your perspective as a non-native English speaking officer, what suggestions could you offer that would help the Army give its Hispanic officers the best possible chances for success?
 - formal -- English language training, etc.
 - informal -- speaking slowly, attention to cultural differences, etc.
- What is your impression of the general attitude of English speakers in the Army towards Spanish speakers?
- Any anecdotes involving yourself or others about use of English in military/non-military context? (enlisted personnel or officers)
- Is there anything you'd like to ask me about? Other suggestions?

AJR
1055 Thomas Jefferson St., NW
Washington, DC 20007

ROBIN DEAN
American Institutes for Research
Suite 200
1055 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

Interview Protocol for Enlisted Personnel

Introduction:

- Purposes, voluntary, selected randomly

Background information:

- How long in Army?
 - Where born/grew up?
 - Educational experience? Degree?
1. Tell me something about your past experiences learning English
 - Where? When? How long?
 - Where did you learn the most? Why? What was most helpful?
 - Have you had a lot of chances to practice speaking English? Where/with whom?
 - How easy/difficult was it for you to learn English? What in particular is difficult for you?
 2. Opinions about DLIELC
 - How long ago did you finish DLIELC?
 - What do you think about DLIELC?
 - Helpful? Did you learn a lot?
 - What did you learn most?
 - What was best about DLIELC?
 - What was not good about DLIELC?
 3. Did anything surprise you when you went to DLIELC?
 4. Do you need more practice in any areas?
 5. What is your current MOS assignment? Do you like this job? (Why? Why not?) What English skill is most important for your job?
 6. What makes a "good" soldier? Is it English or something else?
 7. What kinds of cultural differences affect Puerto Ricans in the Army?
 8. Did you have any trouble with English in Basic Training?
 9. How do you feel about using English on your job now? Comfortable?
 10. How do native English speakers react to Spanish speakers in the Army? Attitudes good or bad?
 11. How can the Army help Puerto Ricans more? Educate Americans about Puerto Ricans? Other? Better training?
 12. Do you have any questions? Any other suggestions for things we should know about?

Supervisor's Interview Protocol--Enlisted Personnel

1. How well do you know this soldier? On what do you base judgments of his/her language ability? (e.g., actual instances of interaction, reports from others, observations, etc.)
2. Compare the performance of this soldier with that of native English speakers in the following areas:
 - general attitude
 - motivation
 - response to commands, orders
 - adjustment to Army life
 - job performance
3. What are your primary communication difficulties, if any, with this soldier? What areas of his/her language ability are weakest and/or strongest?
4. What are native English speaking soldiers' attitudes toward this soldier as an individual and as a member of a different cultural/linguistic group?
5. What kinds of problems have arisen, if any, with this soldier that seem to be directly related to language difficulties? What sorts of problems have arisen that do not seem to be related to language so much as other factors? Examples?
6. What, in your opinion, are the primary language difficulties that non-native English speakers in general face in the Army? Are these MOS-specific or more general?
7. What kinds of further (or different) instruction would be helpful for this soldier in order to improve his/her English? What kinds of non-formal learning experiences might be beneficial?
8. In carrying out specific MOS duties, what determines success primarily? What makes one soldier more successful than another? Language? Other abilities? Attitudes?
9. Are there any issues you would like to ask me about? Any suggestions for other areas that need to be considered?

Supervisor's Interview Protocol--O (Officers)

1. How well/how long have you known this officer? On what do you base judgments of his or her language ability and job performance? (e.g., actual instances of interaction, reports from others, observations)
2. How much opportunity have you had to observe non-native English speakers (both officers and enlisted personnel)? In general, how do non-native English speaking officers compare with other officers in their job performance?
3. What makes a "good" officer? (examples: English, attitude, motivation, knowledge, experience) What is the most important factor for success? How important is English ability to success in the Army for non-native speakers?
4. Are there any specific branches/MOS in which non-native English speaking officers are more likely to experience difficulties? Examples?
5. Does this officer have any English communication difficulties that affect his or her job performance? (Examples?)
6. What communication skills in general have the most impact on an officer's performance? (Speaking, writing? What aspect of speaking--being able to speak clearly, express one's opinions, be persuasive, know how to motivate others?)
7. What are native English speakers' attitudes toward non-native speakers in the Army as individuals and as members of a different cultural group?
8. What predicts success? Are current tests adequate for predicting the success of an officer in the Army? If they are not, what would be better?
9. What do you think the English requirements should be for officers entering BOBC/first duty assignments? Do they seem to be adequate as they currently stand?
10. Have there been any changes over time in the language ability of officers/cadets entering ROTC/BOBC/first duty assignments? Do new officers generally come in speaking English any better/worse than those of a few years ago? (Why?)
11. In your experience, have you noticed any difference between those officers who went to DLIELC and those who did not?
12. Do you have any suggestions for further (or different) kinds of training that might benefit non-native English speaking officers?
13. Do you have any suggestions for things native English speakers (both officers and instructors) might do to assist non-native speakers in the Army?
14. Do you have any anecdotes about the experiences of non-native English speakers in military/non-military context?
15. Are there any questions you would like to ask me? Do you have any suggestions for other areas that need to be considered?

Appendix C

**Comments of Officers on English
Language Preparation Survey**

English Language Preparation: Officer's Survey¹

Question 18. Please share any additional comments or suggestions about how the Army could better screen officer candidates to ensure that they begin their careers with adequate English.

OPI mandatory

Interviews (more structured); test (with realistic goals)

I am not familiar with current screening procedures.

Conduct officer candidate interviews using strictly English-speaking interviewers.

The Army has to develop the writing skills of all officers not only Latin American officers. A lot of soldiers of all ranks can't write. I myself have had to work hard to develop these skills.

This is very difficult to determine. A written test is more effective to determine the level of English knowledge; it is harder to write it than to speak it.

By identifying those officer candidates who are expected to have language problems prior to coming on active duty and then send them to the DLI program.

Probably better testing than what is used today. Be more realistic!

At DLI standards should be higher.

Interviews

Basic language testing. Comprehension and writing.

Administering English comprehension tests to all non-native English speaking nationalities.

Send to DLI all non-native English-speaking officers. It is a great help to become competitive in today's Army.

The Army should test all officer candidates and assist them with English classes, especially in writing.

I am not aware what the Army does right now to test officer candidates.

Besides the interview given prior to being selected for DLI, the officer candidates should be tested on writing skills, i.e., writing essays or letters.

The interviewers should be Active Duty Officers holding a rank of MAJ(P) or LTC.

I would say that the best way is by testing officer candidates. However, we have to remember that not all individuals take tests very well.

¹Comments reproduced as written; brackets indicate editorial change.

I feel that ROTC Cadets should be given the ECL test during the first year of ROTC. I took my test for the first time when I was a senior cadet.

All officers, regardless of ethnic background, should go through an orders and a briefing drills. Drills should be graded by NCO, peers, and CADRE. In OCS, (I'm unfamiliar with USMA/ROTC), I never had the opportunity to do either.

I went to OCS in Puerto Rico and we were not allowed to speak Spanish during the whole training, that was our best reward.

In addition to the ECL and the OPI, written essays and military type briefings should be required, with emphasis on pronunciation and spelling.

If an officer requests a DLI course this request should be approved no matter what the test score was.

Begin by identifying those individuals born outside the U.S. then, with the help of a native Spanish-speaking individual, identify those with a Spanish surname (if born in the U.S.) and ensure they are proficient in the command of the English language. Obviously, those individuals recruited outside the U.S. should be automatically tested and evaluated by:

1. Conducting an informal interview which will test his ability to converse in English.
2. Give them an essay test with topics to choose from.

Before going to ROTC advance camp, ROTC cadets should be screened in a two-hour interview with Army officers and senior NCOs to observe any problems the cadet may have during the six weeks of continual English language exposure.

It does not really matter how well you write or speak English as long as you meet the standards for your MOS. If English written or oral communication is important, then we must screen everybody across the board to include English-speaking candidates. I know of many English natives that can[']t even spell or write. Why make it harder for us, the non-natives?

The ECL test helps the student find out what level he is on but the program should have different types (versions) of this test. Because after taking the test twice or more times, the students know [what] to expect during the test.

I've met many nurses in the Army (Puerto Rican, Phillipino, Korean, etc.) who really shouldn't be officers and/or nurses in the Army. How they got in I will never figure out.

I am native born, USA citizen in Puerto Rico. I consider that it is necessary to assess the English proficiency of our Puerto Rican officers at the beginning of their career and the officer should have the opportunity to go to the school or course which will bring his proficiency to be acceptable.

I believe that the ECL test gives a good indication on the proficient [use] of English for a non-native English speaking officer.

(Prior to OBC training) We know how to write and read English very well; however, the problem is in communicating orally. Separate them from their "niche" at least 2 months during their training. Have a sponsor for at least 3 weeks, so that the officers can make themselves lose the fear they have. (We laugh at each other every time we try to speak and make fun among ourselves for ever. Once we lose that fear things begin to roll like they should. That's my experience in life). I stumbled many times and people laughed at me too many times; once I mastered that fear and told them off as needed (when making fun of me) nobody ever bothered me anymore.

The Army is doing just fine in that matter.

Don't close the door to P.R. English is our second language; we do our best to learn when we come to the Army. Personally, I had some problems with my superior officer, trying to accuse me of things that happened and then saying that I did it, or I didn't do it, because I didn't understand - when this was not the point. I believe in opportunities now, who can believe that you are going to get one?

Ensure that in the work place these officers are in 100% contact with English-speaking peers. This will force them to practice English. If other Spanish-speaking peers are in the work place, chances are they will "hang together" and speak Spanish to each other, thus, decreasing chances for practice.

On questionnaire item #8 - DLI should be harder. It should start with a more advanced vocabulary. It needs more writing, speaking and listening sessions. We the non-native English-speaking people need more emphasis on these areas since we spend more time with fellow officers at DLI. You must keep in mind that although we do not speak the language very well, we (Puerto Ricans) have been brought up with an English background. Grammar is not the problem. Pronunciation is the problem.

1. Use of videotape; tape recorders
2. Conversational English; (increase participation/interest)
3. Group's criticism sections
4. Creative English written; interpretation from different subjects
5. Oral/reading sections

I think it's a good idea if they continue screening the officers in ROTC and start working with them before they get commissioned.

With more oral tests, since that is what anyone will first observe.

- More English requirements.
- oral presentations.

Probably with ECL test and a six month intensive English course at DLI. Once the officer completes this course successfully, he should proceed to OBC and allow him/her to go on active duty. If he doesn't meet the high standards set by DLI he/she should proceed to the reserve or National Guard. Many of my Hispanic officer peers had to get out because of the difficulties they encountered on active duty during their initial tour. They were excellent officers.

Establishing a program in which the SM do not have any contact with Spanish-speaking personnel. In LAFB [Lackland AFB--DLI] there are a variety of nationalities represented, most of the people are Hispanic and so upon completion of daily work they do not practice English but rather . . .

Send candidates to a English comprehension test prior to enlist[ment].

ECL first year of ROTC. Identify deficiencies and work on them for the next three years. English speaking abilities are a must at ROTC advance camp.

Mandatory English class as part of ROTC curriculum during enrollment.

I think the actual procedures are adequate. The ECL and OPI gave me always good base to see at what level my English comprehension was. Even though I only took the OPI once, it should be given yearly or each semester letting the cadet know and track his/her progress, like in the ECL.

All officer candidates should receive a test/interview during their basic course to determine their proficiency level.

ROTC candidates should be evaluated not only in their military classes, but also on their curriculum credits. That is, ROTC [regulations] should also consider and mandate such students to take at least an English conversational course, and to approve it with an acceptable grade.

Provide an OPI test to officer candidates.

None

Provide best test and screening tools.

I strongly recommend that the officers should be sent to DLI. The method of instruction is very good.

Continue testing

1. Grammar - writing English
2. Reading English
3. Speaking English

Provide more training and most of all time for SM's like myself that have the will to improve themselves. Don't expect an officer to attend classes/courses when the assignment/duty demands 95% of his time.

Use ECL test as soon as they become freshmen in college so the students, and the ROTC instructors as well, can realize what should be the starting point for English language training.

- This should be left to the ROTC.
- Every student should pass the ECL test with a minimum of 80%.
- Every student should take and pass at least 12 credits hours of English courses with a minimum of 2-50 or 80% average.

I was born in Puerto Rico [and] I lived all my life in the U.S.

From this questionnaire it seems the Army uses different tests that could be valuable. But in my opinion, an interview is the best way to evaluate the fluency of a candidate. As stated before, though, the interviewer should have correct English pronunciation in order that he can be understood. (i.e., no regional accents).

Start screening cadets as soon as they enter ROTC.

They can better screen officers through tough oral and written examinations designed to evaluate the officer's conversational abilities and his comprehension levels.

Place a set requirement of basic English courses to include a translating course.

I have never come across an officer of Spanish-speaking descent who could not understand and/or speak English, with the exception of an accent, which will always be present.

I suggest that a conversational English test be given prior to active duty and if any barriers are identified, they get the opportunity to improve. It is extremely difficult to adapt to the transition from being a

civilian to Army, and this is much more difficult with a language barrier; maybe a test of English or a foreign language may be useful to identify these limitations.

Enforcement of English as a second language for non English-speaking soldiers as early as possible in their military career. Select personnel based on their ability to speak, read and write English.

In most cases, officers with difficulty in speaking the English language is due to lack of conversational ability. Writing is not a limitation, only conversational.

None

Scree[n] college grades on English-related subjects, enforce the OPI.

Spanish native-speaking officers should be sent to a school where the environment and atmosphere is the English language. San Antonio (Lackland AFB; D.L.I) is 75% Spanish speaking people. Please consider it.

Question 19. Please share any suggestions about how the Army could better prepare non-native English-speaking officers.

DLI should be mandatory to include reading/writing skills.

- a. More up-to-date courses of instruction are needed.
- b. Realistic training which can develop the best of each individual.

I am not sure of the current English training non-native English-speaking officers receive.

English intensive courses attended in the conversational area to avoid native language usage and complete immersion in the English language.

At the most basic level (ROTC) the cadet should be required to practice his English at every possible situation; [actual] time must be dedicated to build strong communicative (oral) and (written) skills.

Attendance at DLI mandatory for all, and raise standards and levels of English classes.

Make it mandatory for non-native English-speaking officers to attend DLI.

The use of creative writing. Keeping everything simple to understand.

Well, my main problem with the English language is my accent. If the Army could provide me with an acceptable speech rehabilitation program being very intense in nature, I think that most of my handicaps will resolve.

Giving them bilingual instructors for training and using them for the first few years of their career in countries with the same language they know.

Provide conversational English classes.

By providing programs such as CTLT during the early years of ROTC, and DLI courses prior to the Basic Officer Courses.

(DLI) is requested by SM.

Not only non-native but native too; have more emphasis on BOBC and BOAC.

Give them the opportunity to attend DLI.

- a. If the individual has problems in ROTC do not send him to Advanced Camp until he has received remedial courses on English.
- b. If he had problems in Advanced Camp send him to DLI before his first assignment or OBC.

Intensive English courses while in ROTC program.

Send all non-native English-speaking officers to DLI.

1. Should test individuals before receiving an ROTC scholarship.
2. Provide classes to these individuals and re-test.

- ROTC should emphasize more on writing skills.
- When the officer attends DLI, he should live with non-latin speaker.

I think that DLI is doing a fine job. Let's insure that the same emphasis is placed whether [it] is Spanish, German, Russian or English that is being taught.

The greatest difficulty I have found has been in writing skills. More emphasis should be placed in this area.

Non-native English-speaking officers could better prepare taking conversational English course during their ROTC years.

The problem is not ethnic. I've seen bad English across the board: From the jive-speaking Black to the incomprehensible southern drawl. The standard should be: If it's understood by the target audience, it's good. This target audience, not the individual officer, may be the root of the problem.

Select good speakers (Bilingual) from the Officer Corp and use them as instructors. I personally will volunteer since I was a Bilingual teacher in Puerto Rico.

1. Briefing requirements once a month either by the unit or a school.
2. Periodic tests (Army writing program) either by the unit or a school.

Do not let them join if the language requirement is not met. They should be able to speak and read English before joining. Money should not be allocated for language training.

Force the cadets of maximum use of English language during the last two years of ROTC. (Book reports, oral presentations of at least 20 minutes, two weeks summer English training focused on Army training teaching, run for ROTC cadets).

Evaluate officer for [his] work and not only on his temporary handicap of the English language. Give the officer the opportunity to improve before being evaluated. Remember that in most cases English is the second language.

The Army should be very strict on what personnel should go to DLI. People look forward to TDY and having an easy time at DLI. Better classes, more teaching hours and less time off.

Nurses who lack proficiency in English but are single, no children or spouse could very easily be brought up to date with their language problems. After all we [have] done [this] for years with enlisted members. Most of the best nursing students in my class were not allowed in the Army because of "poor English." They just lacked the day-to-day practice which could be overcome easily.

I learned English the hard way, filling the gaps and pitfalls with self-improvement. I have seen many Spanish-speaking officers not able to improve their language abilities to an acceptable level for their duties and responsibilities. The officers are the brain of the Armed Forces, the NCO's are the spinal cord. The "brain" has to be most knowledgeable and proficient.

Before attending OBC all non-native English-speaking officers should be sent to DLI.

The Army shall allow non-native English-speaking officers the opportunity to attend DLI. It gives you the opportunity to get used to the language used; also it gives you a lot of confidence so when you go to your BOBC you feel more comfortable with the language.

Offer at least one week of language training to Spanish officers by themselves prior to OBC training. I got lost in the classroom many times because I couldn't follow the class instructors with their instructions. 100% of my class flunked the first test because of this problem.

The only way someone can really learn any language is actually going to a country that speaks that language and staying for a period of time.

Give them the time to go to English school. Officers don't have that opportunity. I start[ed] for 2 years [to take] a course on my own time, I finally graduated, and not because they gave me the time. I had many absences.

The ECL and the OPI are not totally adequate. The OPI should be on a field like situation, i.e., solving a problem or situations where the officer gets involved, preparing a report, answering telephones, making suggestions or other types of oral/verbal communication.

1. I highly recommend non-native English speaking officers to attend DLI for more than 3 months period.
2. Spend more time in group activities; speaking and presenting topics; use of videotapes and time for criticism.

Every person has different problems and deficiencies. When they go to DLI they should identify those deficiencies and divide the groups according to those deficiencies and skills, then give them a program oriented to correct those. Right now they give the same program to everyone and it doesn't matter what the individual's problems are.

Add some course of English comprehension.

Oral presentations

DLI and English courses help, but senior officer must assist in the development and realize that our handicap prevents us from performing 100%.

- Better and more intensive training.
- Give them initial and follow on training.

Offer English classes as part of the ROTC curriculum.

Intensive English classes before Advance ROTC Camp instead offer them CTLT nor Airbone. Successful completion maybe required to attend.

When I was in senior year ROTC they started a program in which cadets with weak English would be taking conversational classes. I believe that non-native English speakers need a lot of contact with the language and practice it as much as possible.

Intensive English classes during their ROTC/OCS courses. Attendance to DLI.

More emphasis should be given to develop writing skills, since (Junior) officers spend most of their time, writing reports, evaluations, etc. Especially the use of active voice, to ensure compliance with Army regulations (AR600-70). Since these officers work for the Army, they should learn how the Army wants them to write.

Incorporate English conversational courses within the ROTC program along with "problem solving" situations given by the instructors periodically.

I found that people learn a language better if they are placed with people who speak the language and they are forced to rely on the language to survive.

Provide a good English course or inform people of the ones already available.

Providing more opportunity to attend English courses not only in the states, but also it should begin in Puerto Rico while they are beginning in ROTC.

Looking for their necessities. Example: If the officer came from ROTC the time to be prepared will be less than a person who has never been in U.S.A.

Do not wait until they are in an advanced course to then demand a high proficiency. Gradually increase with the responsibility.

I think the Army is doing a very good job in this area. Continue to send them to DLI; it is a very good school!

1. All non-native English-speaking officers should attend DLI (even though they pass the ECL)
2. DLI should have instructors with the same language background so they can understand the language problem of the students.
3. DLI should emphasize more in pronunciation laboratory.
4. ROTC should arrange with universities so students can take their selective classes in English. Also, ROTC should pick the English courses that the students will take to develop their English skills (i.e., English lab.)

Intensive courses in written and spoken English, maybe a few months in duration.

- a. Improve conversational skills
- b. Understanding "slang"
- c. Improve basic writing skills
- d. Social integration (is easy to feel left out and thus seek the company of other Spanish speaking persons).

The Army should pay for English courses while in ROTC as an incentive and career development for soon-to-be officers. After commissioning, non-native officers should go to DLI as part of their basic branch training.

More exposure to English during ROTC training; i.e., training here in the U.S.

Voice and diction classes.

The non-native English-speaking officers who do have problems with English should be given the opportunity to attend DLI.

By implementing a conversational English course.

Teach them differences between slang and proper English. The military speaks slang and the evaluation tests are for proper English.

An English spoken test should be given to identify one's ability to communicate by verbal means. If communication barriers are identified they should be required to attend conversational English classes.

Schooling.

The course presently being taught is probably sufficient. However, the non-native speaker should attend the course well in advance of being called on AD [active duty] in order to determine his capabilities and if he would be able to succeed within the Armed Forces. This would eliminate adverse comments in his OER [Officer Evaluation Report].

Classes like the Army writing class should be given at the 3rd and 4th year ROTC. More intense writing, report preparation, and basic communication skill before graduation.

I don't know. Before starting the Basic Course, give a short intensive course in English especially about Army words and vocabulary.

Do not accept them.

Have them present a lot of Information/Decision Briefings which will give them the confidence necessary to loosen up.

1. At DLI, the classes should be conducted at different levels according to what is your level. The ECLT doesn't measure that capacity.
2. Courses should be focused to challenge student's capacity at maximum level.

Question 20. Finally, if you have any further ideas or suggestions that could improve the Army's recruitment and retention of qualified non-native English-speaking officers, please share them here.

Ensure that officers really need the training.

Provide these officers the opportunity to develop their English skills prior to coming on active duty by means of courses/lessons to be offered during ROTC or by correspondence.

Don't discriminate against them because they speak with an accent!!! [P.S. I did not go on AD in P.R. I attended the University of Florida for 4 years and then received my commission there. I don't think I should be part of your sampling. Perhaps I had an unfair advantage since I grew up speaking English (although I had a slight accent, and still do)].

This question is not clear for me. Do you want to retain (?) non-native or only those who speak and with good English.

Assign them to positions where they can put in use there second language.

Well, I have been told since I first enlisted in the U.S. Army that "we" the Hispanics were excellent soldiers and I strongly believe that because of our language limitations we should not be discriminated [against] or denied opportunities for progression. But, I also believe that we should take upon ourselves the responsibilities of becoming more fluent in the English language and perhaps with help from the Department of Defense we'll be able to achieve that.

Use them in a country that will speak their native language. The personnel in the base or post will speak English, so they will learn from that experience and they will feel more relaxed. I think this is a must in the first few years of their career.

Provide the officer time to enroll in course to improve. If he cannot then eliminate [him] from the service.

For a non-native English-speaking officer the initial 3 years in the Armed Forces are critical, the system does not allow for a language learning period. The rating the officer receives during his initial assignment in oral communications or skills does not reflect the actual learning that the rated officer has achieved, and in most cases this rating could result in the officer not being selected for retention.

The Army should screen all the records and use the already native Spanish-speaking officers in assignments that require Spanish-speaking officers; this way we could serve the Army better and the Army could also save millions in school training for non Spanish-speaking officers. Not only Spanish language but other languages as well.

Pronunciation and the accent are some of the things that should be corrected in a special course just for it, then advance to reading and comprehension and finally editing.

Non-native English-speaking officers should be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they can do a good job and become outstanding officers.

Assign these officers to be stationed near Spanish-speaking population, i.e., El Paso, Ft. Huachuca, etc.

- The Army should not emphasize that the non-native English-speaking officers get evaluated based on their writing or speaking skills.
- The Army should add a correspondence course in which the non-native English-speaking officers can train and improve their writing skills.

Yes, my suggestion is to put EO classes or orientations back in the in-processing of any post. Non-native English speaking officers and enlisted need to feel part of the team. Just because their primary language is not English, they are not less qualified because of it.

An officer's language abilities are as good as his rater and senior rater's expectation of what it should be. Through better testing media (of all officers) recruitment can filter out those who don't have mastery of basic oral/written skills. Retention is in the realm of the rater/senior rater authority and wisdom.

Currently, we created a Hispanic softball team to develop unit cohesion; also on Fridays we established a "get together" at the NCO's Club.

Provide an opportunity for learning or refining English speaking/writing skills. If the officer or EM communicates well he will obviously be more confident.

Do not treat them any different than native English-speaking individuals. Language should not be a handicap; and if it is, then enroll in remedial training.

Retention: Fully-funded programs on advanced studies (M.S. or M.A.) for participation on specialty 48 (Foreign Area Officer) or United States Military Academy professor in areas such as foreign language (Spanish).

If you are qualified then why worry about it?

Students should be required to take composition classes on campus; not only one but at last one per semester until he or she is commissioned.

Treat non-native English-speaking officers as officers like any American officer would like to be treated. The key word is: listen to what we are saying and don't concentrate so much on our accent or nonverbal gestures. Be creative. Allow that good soldier to participate in other projects. Encourage them to take advantage of all the excellent programs the Education Office offers.

None

1. Send them to English course for at least 3 months.
2. Prepare your personnel to help [the] Spanish speaker.
3. Test them after the course and make sure that they improve their language (English)

1. Recommendation from ROTC/instructors
2. Motivation and interest in an Army career
3. Motivation and interest to learn and improve
4. Student progress

I never encountered any problems with my English because I went to school in Texas. I graduated from high school and I was able to go to college in the United States. I believe in sending those cadets from P.R. to some kind of prep program before going to any military training. Some of them have the potential to be good leaders, but because of their handicap they are unable to excel. Most of these non-native English-speaking officers could be very helpful in the long run as liaison officers in South America and Central America.

This is a very good question but your word "qualified" is the key word that in most cases disqualifies us from the Armed Forces. I highly recommend for retention:

1. Allow officers with language problems [to] work in countries where this language can benefit the Armed Forces.
2. Look carefully at officers that face elimination. Their language problems may have been a critical factor. Again don't eliminate them, utilize them in other capacities.
3. Need more non native English-speaking mentors.
4. I know a Hispanic CPT that was passed over for Major. He went to CAS³ and his class leader told him he needed to improve his English. This officer has a strong Spanish accent and his vocabulary and grammar is satisfactory. According to this CPT, this was a critical factor for not completing the course.

He is now facing elimination, but this same officer served in Panama for three years and did an outstanding job coordinating operations between soldiers from the Honduran and Panamanian Army. As my Battalion Commander said: "If you have him writing SOP's he will have problems, but you give him some troops and he will train them effectively." I have been in the Army for five years and until this date I consider myself fully "qualified." My language skills have improved very much, but I know if I do not have the same language skills as a native English-speaking officer when I become a Major, I will be eliminated from the service somewhere down the road. Keep qualified non-native English officers, but I recommend that branch managers look closer at the officer they intend to eliminate.

The English course offered by DLI may be divided into two sections: first regular basic English and the section following should be military effective writing, composition of DF's, Decision Papers, etc.

I recommend that officers that have already attended the DLI course, before having their first encounter with OBC and Permanent Party, be sent back again to DLI after their first assignment for some sort of advanced course. This will allow them to pick up whatever they couldn't pick up before, and also will allow them to evaluate and concentrate in those areas they feel are more important.

Congratulations for taking a first step into this condition. Now please don't drop the initiative. I hope something constructive results from it.

Sometimes non-native English-speaking officers are discriminated against during their OER evaluations. Some Raters/Senior Raters are under the impression that it is reasonable to give an officer a lower rating on Communication Skills when he is not a native English speaking officer, regardless of how well he communicates.

ROTC should look for quality not quantity. The Army should develop a program for non-native English speaking officers that helps them to continue to develop their English skill (i.e., a list of correspondence courses that help to develop writing skills; LAB courses to develop pronunciation and comprehension).

Competition with native speakers is tough and borders on unfair. Not to the Army's fault, but [that] of the circumstances.

Have a requirement of testing once a year just like the Army linguists are required.

In an institution that requires productivity, that institution must let the individual be productive and provide all those basic elements that all humans need, when performance is expected from them. Not only English-speaking officers would be hard to retain and/or recruit, if the system continues to place preference on selected individuals/officers.

ROTC programs outside CONces should enforce, focus on more training (classroom environment) in the English language which develop his conversational and writing skills.

Recruitment - I don't know. Retention: First of all a lot of people in the Army especially native Americans need to be more understanding and forget prejudice. Second, give an opportunity and time to become more familiar and comfortable in English speaking. Instead of making fun or criticizing the non-native English speaking they need to teach them in a way that makes the officer feel that they care for him and makes him feel good about it.

None

Raters and Senior Raters need to closely monitor those junior LT's in their first duty assignment and make appropriate comments on OERs.

Appendix D

Assessing the Appropriateness of Standards on the OPI and ECLT

Introduction

This appendix outlines procedures for assessing the appropriateness of the performance standards in effect for two English language proficiency examinations used by the Army in the selection of non-native English speaking officers and enlisted soldiers. It is appended to the 1988 technical report, Evaluation of English Language Needs, Preparation, and Screening Among Non-Native English Speaking Officers and Soldiers. That document reports findings about the effects of test standards now in use, and is intended to serve as a baseline of information should there be a desire to conduct further standard setting exercises. A brief outline of standard setting options is given here, and activities already completed in the 1987-88 evaluation are duly noted.

Validity and Standard Setting Concerns

The English Comprehension Level Test (ECLT) and Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) are two measures of English language proficiency that the Army employs as screening devices at various points in the careers of officers and enlisted personnel. Although requirements for meeting the standards on the OPI are not as stringently applied as the requirements for the ECLT, the two examinations will be treated as equally important in this model. Each is, in effect, an employment test, and as such must satisfy two conditions:

- 1) The test must measure factors that are reasonably related to the requirements of the job or other situation for which it selects. A legally, ethically, and technically acceptable test measures all and only those aspects of a factor that are relevant to the situation for which screening is desired. The test should also reflect the relative importance of different aspects. For example, if officers' language-related responsibilities include reading, composition, and extemporaneous speaking, these should be measured in a test of English mastery; if speaking is the most critical or most frequent duty, it should be weighted accordingly in the test.

- 2) The performance standard established for the test must demonstrably and reliably discriminate between candidates who can succeed and those who cannot. The primary purpose of a screening test is to separate candidates into "acceptable-nonacceptable" groups. A secondary purpose may be to rank those within the acceptable group, a useful function if an agency has limited developmental resources or position openings. The more directly the standard reflects the factor relevant to screening, the better. For example, if officers must be able to compose written reports in English, the best standard would be one based upon a report writing exercise. A score on a vocabulary test that is correlated with writing performance would be a less direct measure, and therefore less acceptable.

Approaches to Standard Setting

Validity

A standard cannot be set on any measure until the validity of that measure has been demonstrated. Correlational studies cited in the body of this report show that the ECLT is related to other tests of English proficiency or reading comprehension. This is evidence of validity only to the extent that these other tests have been demonstrated to measure the English language skills and knowledge needed to succeed in an Army career. Comments from Hispanic officers, enlisted members, and their supervisors suggested that the ECLT does not measure all of the English language skills needed for success in the military. Examination of personnel variables also suggested that meeting the standard on the ECLT or the OPI was neither necessary nor sufficient for success; this could be explained by difficulties with either the tests themselves or the standards established for them. At least three different approaches exist that could provide adequate means for determining the validity of the ECLT and OPI. Each approach is described briefly in the following sections.

1. Task analysis. This approach would analyze empirically the nature and amount of English skills and knowledge required in job performance and would compare these with the content of the tests. Because there were so many reports of English facility

improving over time with no formal instruction, we recommend that English demands be analyzed for different career stages. For enlisted soldiers these might be BCT, AIT, and permanent party. For officers the periods might be BOBC and first duty assignment. Several areas were found to be salient in the 1987-1988 evaluation. These include: writing (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and composition, particularly for officers); reading comprehension of military materials; oral comprehension and expression using military situations and vocabulary; and use of a standard American accent (again, particularly important for officers). Empirical data could include samples of reading materials, classroom quizzes, models of acceptably completed writing assignments, tape recordings of typical oral presentations, and the like.

2. Informed judgment. It is possible to refer to the judgment of those who evaluate task performance rather than observing this performance directly. Those who prepare officer or enlisted soldier candidates, or who judge the adequacy of their performance, can acceptably identify the specific English language skills and knowledge needed. For example, BOBC instructors can identify the kinds of materials their students must read, and the types of written and verbal expression required in their classes. Drill sergeants can do the same for the English requirements for enlisted recruits. This inventory of skills and knowledge would comprise the test specifications for screening measures, and the ECLT and OPI could be examined against these specifications. We strongly urge that such an exercise be complemented by a review of the match between what the ECLT and OPI are intended to measure and what they actually measure. The 1987-88 evaluation (Chapter 8) raised questions about whether the ECLT tested vocabulary knowledge or auditory discrimination.

3. Predictive power. A third commonly used method for determining whether the content of a screening test is adequate is to examine empirically whether the test is correlated with success. In simplified terms, this procedure involves:

- Defining "success" in operational terms, such as retention or reenlistment eligibility, promotion within a given time frame, promotion potential rating, evaluation ratings, etc.;
- Identifying cases for whom this information is available (the full report describes use of DLIELC, OMF and EMF data bases);

- Examining the statistical correlation between test performance and the selected success indicators.

We must offer several cautions about using this approach. The first is that an absence of relationship can be because the skills measured on a test are not related to success or because the established standard does not admit soldiers with varying performance. For example, if all officers score between 90 and 100 on the ECLT, there is simply little variance to relate to success indicators. The relationship between a test and success on the job cannot be measured accurately unless some who do poorly on the test are allowed to attempt the job.

A second caution, perhaps illustrating the first problem, is that the 1987-88 evaluation found little relationship between ECLT or OPI performance and available success measures. Some officers and enlisted members who met the test criteria did not remain in the Army. Others who did not meet the cutoff scores apparently were successful in the military. Whether this finding was due to the content of the tests or to the standards set for them is unknown.

Finally, a statistical correlation is not enough to demonstrate that the content of a screening test is appropriate. There must be a plausible relationship between the test's content and that of the situation for which screening is desired. Failure to explicate this relationship leaves the testing agency open to charges of bias or discrimination on the basis of factors other than those which are salient to the job.

Standard Setting Procedures

There are many technically acceptable methods for establishing performance standards on tests. The approach suggested here rests largely on professional judgment. It is proposed because it is adequate to meet the technical and legal challenges that presumably could be raised against test standards used for career selection purposes; because it is easily understood and generally found acceptable by nontechnical audiences; and because it can be carried out with relatively less need for statistical and psychometric skills than are demanded by empirical methods. Perhaps most importantly, the procedure described here

does not require admitting candidates who fail to meet current test standards in order to form a pool of "unqualified" candidates, an experimental procedure which might be difficult for the Army to implement.

We did not find clear evidence in the 1987-88 evaluation that the ECLT and OPI measured those aspects of English that were required for success in the Army. Thus, we suggest that standard setting include an evaluation of the tests' validity. Standard setting could be carried out most efficiently in two phases: a technical review of the tests, followed by panel reviews of their content in light of required performance.

Technical Review of Tests

The first phase would involve reviewing the ECLT and OPI against their specifications. Test specifications operationally describe the objectives of a test, listing the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be measured; weight the objectives in order to determine the number of items for each; and identify the proportion of various kinds of items (e.g., recall or application) for each objective. This review should be conducted by persons with expertise in ESL curriculum and test development. The products would include a list of the desired specifications for the ECLT and OPI, a list of the specifications actually evidenced in the tests, and a judgment about the match between the tests and their desired specifications.

Content Review

If there is considerable discrepancy between the actual and purported contents of either test, a decision must be made about which content is to be reviewed in this next stage. The following steps could be taken in the content review:

1. Establish panels of judges. These should include, for both officers and enlisted soldiers, representatives of instructors and supervisors issuing assignments, and evaluating work, in which English language skills must be applied.
2. Establish among the panelists agreement upon the minimally qualified candidate (officer or enlistee). This hypothetical person will distinguish between those

who can and those who cannot succeed in the training or performance situations with which the panelists are familiar.

3. Review the test content. Panelists should judge whether each objective represents knowledge or skills needed by candidates in the exercise of training or duty responsibilities; what knowledge and skills, if any, have been left out; and the extent to which the emphasis given in the test matches that accorded the knowledge or skill in real life. For the OPI it is recommended that the operational descriptors of the various performance levels, with tape or video recorded examples, be used as test specifications. Serious discrepancies between the content of either test and panelists' judgments about the English language knowledge and skills required should lead to discussion of whether the tests should be used.
4. Review the test items. Assuming the content and emphasis of the tests is deemed acceptable, panelists would next review each test item in the ECLT and judge whether it measured knowledge or skill needed for success at the level they supervised (e.g., in BCT, at first duty assignment). The same would be done for the factors used to assign points on the OPI (i.e., what an examinee must do to qualify for a given rating). The proportion of acceptable items would be used later to calculate the passing score.

Knowledge Estimation

After determining the relevance of the tests' content, panelists would next estimate the performance of a minimally qualified candidate. There are a number of methods for doing this; the procedure suggested here¹ is described primarily to illustrate the general approach.

1. Rate item difficulty. Panelists would judge whether each item in the ECLT would be easy, moderately difficult, or hard for the minimally qualified candidate to answer correctly.

¹Ebel, R.L. (1972). Essentials of educational measurement. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

2. Rate item relevance. Panelists would judge whether the content of each item in the ECLT was essential, important, or not very important for the minimally qualified candidate to know.
3. Estimate proportion answered correctly by the minimally qualified candidate in each cell formed by crossing the two factors (e.g., easy-essential, easy-important, hard-not very important, etc.).
4. Calculate a judges' cut score on the ECLT. This would be the average, across panelists, sum of items in each cell. Say, for example, that the panelists rated 40 items as "easy-essential," and that they estimated a minimally qualified officer candidate would correctly answer 90 percent of "easy-essential" items. That would mean 36 items ($40 \times .90$) would have to be answered; and the process would be repeated for each of the remaining eight cells. The total number of items across all nine cells would comprise the judges' estimated standard.
5. Establish a test standard. Because all tests are subject to measurement error, standard setting exercises frequently adjust the judges' cut score to account for the statistical likelihood of excluding qualified candidates or accepting unqualified candidates. Generally this step uses empirical information from actual test administrations and employs the standard error of measurement to adjust the recommended score in setting a standard.
6. Establish a standard for the OPI. The OPI is graded holistically, and the procedures used to establish a standard for the ECLT would not be appropriate. We suggest that a sample of tape or video recorded language samples illustrating the different levels of the OPI be judged by the panelists. These samples should represent all scoring levels, from 0 to 5. Panelists would rate each sample as acceptable, unacceptable, or borderline. The average score rated as borderline (presumably different for officers and enlisted soldiers; possibly different for different stages of each group's careers) would serve as the OPI performance standard.

Summary

The procedure given in this appendix is not the only method that can be used in establishing performance standards on a test used to control access to job, educational, or other career opportunities. It is intended to provide a readily understandable model of the issues that must be addressed in any standard setting exercise. These issues are concerned with legality and technical acceptability. They include the content of the measures, the measures' technical quality, and the rationale for selecting a desired test performance level.